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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to assist the trainer in planning and conducting leadership training for charter-school founders and operators. There are five core content areas for leadership development: Start-Up Logistics, Regulatory Issues, Assessment and Accountability, Governance and Management, and Community Relations. Suggestions and activities for conducting training in these areas are provided here, as well as generic training tips. The guide suggests conducting a needs assessment of the charter founders/operators in the site area as part of the planning process. An appendix consists of a pre-assessment tool: the Charter School Leadership Training Needs Assessment. Once the needs of the local charter audience have been determined, the specifics of the training event can be planned. Each content area is relatively self-contained, and may or may not be combined with other areas, depending on need. Other major considerations include the total number of participants, location, number of sessions and possible concurrent sessions, and addressing the needs of heterogeneous groups versus splitting up participants into natural work groups (Will all participants be preoperational or will there be a mix of preoperational and operational? Will participants come in school teams or as individuals?). (RT)

ED 455 593

Charter Starters

Training Guide

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Charter Starters

Training Guide

Rural Education Program
Dr. Joyce Ley, Director

June 2000

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Introduction

This guide is intended to assist the trainer in planning and conducting leadership training for charter school founders and operators. There are five core content areas for leadership development: Start-Up Logistics; Regulatory Issues; Assessment and Accountability; Governance and Management; and Community Relations. Suggestions and activities for conducting training in these areas are provided here, as well as generic training tips.

As part of the planning process, consider conducting a needs assessment of the charter founders/operators in your area. The appendix consists of a pre-assessment tool, the *Leadership Training Needs Assessment*.[1] Once you have determined the needs of your local charter audience, you can begin to plan the specifics of the training event. Each content area is relatively self-contained, and may or may not be combined with other areas, depending on need. Other major considerations include:

- Total number of participants
- Location
- Number of sessions and possible concurrent sessions
- Addressing the needs of heterogeneous groups versus splitting up participants into natural work groups. (For example, will all participants be pre-operational? Or will you have a mix of pre-operational and operational? Will you have participants come in school teams or as individuals?)

If you decide to employ trainers other than yourself, consider contacting your state's department of education, your region's equity and/or comprehensive centers, or your state's charter association (if there is one) to assemble a list of potential trainers.[1]

Much of the background information that is referenced in this guide can be found in the *Charter Starters Leadership Training Workbook* series. NWREL staff are available to provide assistance and direction in using this training guide.

1 For an electronic version of the needs assessment or an updated list of potential trainers, please contact the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory Rural Education Program (phone: 1-800-547-6339, ext. 546; e-mail: ruraled@nwrel.org).

Generic Trainer Tips

Characteristics of a Good Trainer

- Well-organized
- Presents an outline of the course
- Emphasizes conceptual learning
- Answers questions clearly and thoroughly
- Uses examples
- Encourages group discussions
- Assesses strengths and weaknesses before, during, and after training
- Allows trainees to express problems
- Encourages trainees to share experiences
- Effectively uses visual aids
- Stimulates interest and shows enthusiasm
- Does not allow one individual to dominate the direction of the session

Tips on Activities

- Do an opening activity to get the group immediately involved and communicating
- Facilitate small- and large-group discussion
- Have the group designate a reporter to report back on activities developed in the session

Allow time for networking with other school groups. The groups may want to present their statements to the entire group at the end of the activity or just share as they network.

Instructional Techniques

Vary these from session to session or within sessions:

- Case study
- Role-playing
- Games

- Lecture method (live or video)
- Computer-assisted instruction
- Audiovisual techniques
- Team training
- Brainstorming
- Panel discussion
- Small discussion groups
- Demonstration workshop, where participants complete a task

Learning Styles

- Some learners do better listening, while some learn more if they take notes
- Some prefer to listen, while others learn by talking about an issue
- Some learners are more visual while others are more auditory
- Be sure to consider diverse learning styles when structuring your session(s) so that you address these differences
- Most of us learn best by doing, so include a list of resources and other support for the participants to access once they get back to their own contexts

Avoiding Learner Overload and Increasing Transfer Through Design

- Talk less and incorporate key learning points into succinct reference notes.
- Do less while your learners do more.
- Design supplementary materials for trainees so that they have something to refer to after the session.
- Relevance—conduct needs assessment.
- Eliminate any barriers that you foresee as preventing the training from being effective.
- Chunk size—use larger conceptual chunks of information rather than using many small pieces of information (chess example).
- Have participants complete an action plan that outlines the steps they will take once they are "back to work."

- Facilitate networking so participants develop a support association. The network might include cross-site visits, meetings, or computer listservs.
- Run courses over a period of time rather than as an intensive workshop.
- Provide follow-up opportunities, such as an "assessment lab" where participants can come to discuss what has and hasn't worked for them.

Using Slides or PowerPoint Presentations Effectively

- Use slides to support what the speaker says (instead of the other way around)
- Use outline or bullet format—avoid sentences, since their length can distract attention from the rest of the presentation
- Avoid cluttering up each slide with too much information—limit the information to one or two key points per slide
- Select colors that are pleasing to the eye but that aren't distracting

Workbook 1: Start-Up Logistics

A. Reality Check

Suggestions

- Suggest that before people get involved in starting a charter school, they should make sure they understand the concept and what it takes to create a school.
- Discuss the importance of reading the state charter school law to familiarize themselves with state expectations. They will need to refer to the law throughout the planning and implementation process.
- Suggest that session participants attend charter school conferences and/or meetings in their region to gain knowledge on specific steps in the process.

What Do You Know About Charter Schools?

(For use with Reality Check section, pp. 1–16)

Training Objective

To find out what the audience knows about charter schools.

This activity is best suited for pre-operational charter school leaders and a large-group discussion.

Materials Needed

1. Charter school quiz (overheads) extracted from Workbook 1 and copies for everyone
2. Pens or pencils
3. Take-home handout: Charter school development guide

Instructions

1. Prepare overheads of the charter school quiz and check information for updates.
2. Hand out the quiz at the beginning of the activity. Make the session interactive by letting participants say the answer out loud instead of having them raise their hands.

Charter School Quiz

1. Arizona passed the nation's first charter school law. (T, F)

2. The year the first charter school law passed was:
   a. 1985 b. 1991 c. 1953

3. There are currently 37 states with charter school laws in the United States. (T, F)

4. As of September 1999, more than _____ were in operation.
   a. 500 b. 1,100 c. 1,400

5. As of 1999, about 4 percent of charter schools have closed. (T, F)

6. All charter schools must have a sponsoring agency. (T, F)

7. All states with a charter law permit newly created charter schools. (T, F)

8. Arizona has the largest number of charter schools in operation. (T, F)

9. Serving a special population was reported as one of the most important reasons for charter school founding by what percentage of charter schools?
   a. 13 percent b. 23 percent c. 43 percent

10. The percentage of students with disabilities enrolled in charter schools is significantly more than the percentage enrolled in traditional public schools. (T, F)

11. Charter schools consistently receive all Title I funding for which they are eligible. (T, F)

12. Charter schools are waived from the fair and open admissions process. (T, F)

13. All states with a charter law allow automatic waivers of most of the education code. (T, F)

14. The greatest difficulty for newly created charter schools implementing their charters is lack of start-up funds. (T, F)

15. Nationally, the percentage of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students served in charter schools is about the same as in other public schools. (T, F)

16. Charter schools enroll about 18 percent of public school students in states with a charter law. (T, F)

17. On average, how many children are served per school?
   a. 527 b. 257 c. 137

18. All teachers must be certified. (T, F)

19. Some charter schools offer noninstructional services (e.g., health and social services) (T, F)

20. Charter schools are public schools. (T, F)

Charter School Quiz Answer Key

1. **False.** Minnesota passed the first charter school law (Berman, et al., 1999).

2. **b.** The first charter school law passed in 1991. City Academy in Minnesota opened as the first charter school in 1992 (Nathan, 1996).

3. **True.** A total of 37 states (including Washington, D.C.) have charter school laws (as of September 1999); 27 states and the District of Columbia have charter schools in operation serving more than 250,000 students (Nelson, et al., 2000).

4. **c.** As of September 1999, 1,484 charter schools were reported to be operating in the United States (Nelson, et al., 2000).

5. **True.** A total of 59 charter schools have closed since the first charter school opened in 1992. During the 1998–99 school year, 27 charter schools closed (Nelson, et al., 2000).

6. **True.** All charter schools must have a sponsor. State law determines which agencies are allowed to grant (sponsor) a charter (e.g., a school district, state board of education, city government, college, or university) (Berman, et al., 1999).

7. **False.** Arkansas, Mississippi, and New Mexico do not allow newly created charter schools (Berman, et al., 1999).

8. **True.** As of September 1999, Arizona has the most charter schools in operation (222), followed by California (110), and Michigan (146) (Center for Education Reform, 1999).

9. **b.** Almost a quarter of charter schools (23 percent) reported that serving a special population was a reason for founding. About 20 percent said that serving a special population was their most important motivation (Nelson, et al., 2000).

10. **False.** In the 1997–98 school year, students with disabilities made up 8 percent of the student population in charter schools and 11 percent of the student population in all public schools of the same states (Berman, et al., 1999).

11. **False.** Only 53.3 percent of eligible charter schools reported that they actually received Title I funds (Berman, Nelson, Ericson, Perry, & Silverman, 1998). Title I is a federal program that provides assistance to schools and districts serving in areas with high concentrations of low-income students. It is currently the largest program of federal support for public schools.

12. **False.** To be eligible for federal funds, charter schools must have a fair and open admissions process, conducting outreach and recruitment to all segments of the community they serve.

13. **False.** Only 17 states and the District of Columbia allow automatic waivers. Charter schools in other states must apply for specific waivers (Berman, et al., 1998).

14. **True.** Lack of start-up funds was reported by 54.7 percent of charter schools as a difficulty in implementation, followed by inadequate operating funds (41.4 percent), lack of planning time (37.4 percent), inadequate facilities (35.8 percent), and state or local board opposition (20.7 percent) (Berman, et al., 1999).

15. **True.** Nationally, both charter and traditional public schools enroll about 10 percent LEP students. However, there is great variation in the state-by-state percentages. Charter schools in Texas and Minnesota enroll a much higher percentage of LEP students than the traditional public schools, while the reverse is true in Alaska, Florida, and Colorado (Berman, et al., 1999).

16. **False.** During the 1997–98 school year, charter schools enrolled less than 1 percent of the public school students in states with a charter law (Nelson, et al., 2000).

17. **c.** During the 1998–99 school year, the average number of charter schools was 137, compared to an average of 475 in all public schools (Nelson, et al., 2000).

18. **False.** Most teachers are certified, although certification varies from state to state. Some states require 50 percent of the teachers to be certified, while allowing the other 50 percent to not be certified (Berman, et al., 1999).

19. **True.** About two-thirds of charter schools provide one or more non-instructional services to their students (Berman, et al., 1999).

20. **True.** *All* charter schools are public schools. All schools are held accountable for their student outcomes, get state funding for each student, and must have open enrollment, just as traditional public schools do.

Charter School Development Checklist

Task	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed (e.g., budget, committees)
Vision/Mission Statement		
Develop a vision/mission statement		
Align standards, assessment, and curriculum with school vision/mission		
Use mission/vision in making decisions in all other areas		
Core Founding Group		
Develop and solidify a core founding group		
Conduct a skills inventory of expertise		
Develop a 3–5 year strategic plan		
Access experts as needed		
Application Process		
Read your state charter school law		
Obtain application		
Identify key application components		
Revisit vision/mission statement		
Develop a quality written application		
Begin school development process		
Facilities		
Conduct needs assessment		
Identify options		
Evaluate/inspect potential sites		
Review codes/ordinances/regulations		
Obtain resources for financing a facility		
Select a site		
Acquire site (lease, purchase, etc.)		
Make necessary repairs and installations		
Arrange custodial services		
Establish insurance policies		

Charter School Development Checklist—continued

Task	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed (e.g., budget, committees)
Financial Management/Business Plan		
Develop a business plan		
Develop a planning budget		
Designate financial manager for school (optional)		
Hire CPA/auditor (optional)		
Establish accounting system and budget development		
Segregate funds (public versus private)		
Identify check writers and signers		
Purchase materials and technology		
Appoint treasurer		
Develop internal controls and fiscal policies		
Establish a payroll system		
Establish staff benefits		
Develop and monitor cash flow plan		
Establish banking arrangements		
Develop long-term fiscal plans		
Acquire forms (purchase orders, etc.)		
Schedule board financial reviews		
Continuously update financial statements		
Governance and Management		
Develop an organization vision/mission		
Determine governance structure		
Recruit board members		
Develop bylaws (legal assistance optional)		
Define committees		
Distinguish roles and responsibilities of the board		
Develop a board manual		
Establish a board calendar		

Charter School Development Checklist—continued

Task	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed (e.g., budget, committees)
Define communication methods to school leaders, staff, and community		
Identify legal status, tax-exempt status		
Obtain board liability insurance		
Develop an evaluation plan for the board		
Plan for transition in board members		
Review public meetings law (state-specific)		
Personnel and Policy Development		
Establish personnel policies/handbook		
Create student and parent handbook/ policy manual		
Determine staffing needs		
Develop hiring policies and procedures		
Establish terms of employment		
Design benefit packages, vacation policies, pension policies, workers compensation		
Develop staff policies		
Write/post job description/ads		
Screen and select potential candidates		
Conduct background/reference check		
Conduct orientation		
Create personnel files		
Establish parent involvement contracts		
Design discipline policies, code of ethics, and student responsibility code		
Establish enrollment, attendance, transportation, food services, dress code, and harassment policies		
Develop a school calendar		
Determine break schedule		
Acquire medical forms (students and staff)		

Charter School Development Checklist—continued

Task	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed (e.g., budget, committees)
Design teacher evaluation and professional development plans (ongoing task)		
Accountability		
Revisit your vision/mission		
Describe the standards and goals for students and staff in alignment with the school vision		
Clearly identify the school goals/ outcomes		
Align curriculum with school vision		
Develop academic accountability plan		
A. Develop goals, standards, and objectives		
B. Describe what the students should know and be able to do in core subject areas		
C. Describe the desired results of the school		
Establish fiscal accountability plan		
A. Develop a financial plan		
B. Develop a planning budget		
C. Assess fiscal management options		
D. Establish an oversight system		
Establish parent accountability plan		
A. Identify for whom the charter is accountable		
B. Develop communication with the public		
C. Work with the parents and community		
Develop student assessment and evaluation procedures		
A. Identify goals for students		
B. Integrate specific curriculum based on the goals and standards		
C. Conduct assessment plan		
D. Revisit curriculum and instruction based on assessment		
Regulatory Issues		
Review your state charter school law		
Establish compliance with all state and federal requirements		

Charter School Development Checklist—continued

Task	Person(s) Responsible	Resources Needed (e.g., budget, committees)
Review civil rights/equity issues		
Develop health and safety policy handbook		
Establish a special education program		
Apply for grants for special education funds		
Identify special education needs		
Develop IEPs		
Identify local, state, and federal resources		
Community Relations		
Identify laws and regulations associated with public relations and working with the media		
Form a public relations committee/ obtain qualified consultants		
Develop a public relations plan		
A. Research past and current media coverage and public opinion of school		
B. Develop an action plan		
C. Implement your plan into action after receiving board approval		
D. Evaluate your communication plan		
Identify strategies to deal with external controversy/internal conflict		
Develop a crisis management plan		
Develop appropriate communication materials (i.e., brochures, newsletters, etc.)		
Identify and implement appropriate methods for marketing to potential parents and students		
Make parent/community involvement opportunities available		
Implement strategies to avoid burnout		

B. Vision and Mission

Suggestions

- Emphasize the importance of team building and the process of developing the school
- Consider suggesting the need to recognize the importance of establishing a common ground
- Suggest that the vision/mission needs to contain detailed, rather than generic, statements; language can be powerful
- Suggest that the vision/mission statements should be an evolving development
  - — Charter schools should give statements to all new hires; can incorporate changes as identified by new hires
- Have sample vision/mission statements for participants to review
- Develop a feedback mechanism for school and community (i.e., suggestion box)
- Allow time for networking

Creating Vision and Mission Statements

(For use with Vision and Mission section, pp. 17–25)

Training Objectives

To develop a vision statement

To develop a mission statement

(Groups that have already written their vision and mission statements should revisit them.)

This activity is best suited for pre-operational charter school leaders and small groups.

Materials Needed

1. Sample mission statements for each participant
2. Large sheets of paper for Instruction #1

Instructions

1. Before the groups begin writing a vision or mission statement, have them loosely define "what we think we know; what we have learned; and what we actually know."

2. Hand out the sample vision and mission statements. Explain that there is a difference between the two statements. The vision and mission statements should capture the spirit and uniqueness of your school. Keep the vision short, believable, and reality-based. The mission should describe the strategy of attaining the vision. The groups can then establish their own vision (the dream) and mission (how you get there).

3. Ask the groups to consider the following questions in preparation for the writing of the statements:

   - Where do you want to go with the school? What do you want to be? What direction(s) will the school be taking?
   - What do you want for yourselves five to 10 years from now?
   - Clearly describe your future dominant driving force(s):
     - — Programs offered?
     - — Educational philosophy?
     - — Satisfying students'/parents'/community needs?
   - Be creative here, but make sure your description is believable, understandable, motivating, and achievable.
   - How will your school fit the needs of your students/parents, your staff, and your community?

Examples of Charter School Mission Statements

Examples of charter school mission statements with respect to each of the five elements of a mission statement:

Values
Neighborhood House Charter School
Boston, MA
School Status: In operation
Year of opening: 1997

"The Neighborhood House Charter School of Boston believes that the underpinning of change relies on the creation of a learning community, where everyone has something to learn and something to teach. The mission of the school is to develop in each child the love of learning, and ability to nurture family members, friends, and self, the ability to engage in critical thinking, and to demonstrate complete mastery of the academic building blocks necessary for a successful future."

Educational Approach
Public School 2005
Milwaukie, OR
School Status: In operation
Year of opening: 1998

"The mission of Public School 2005 (PS 2005) is to recognize and nurture all human intelligence so that students and staff of varied cultural and social backgrounds will achieve their full intellectual and social potential. The founders envision a school that creates an inclusive community working together to support student achievement and a strong sense of self-worth. The school will offer a comprehensive educational program by placing a strong emphasis on K–6 core curriculum while infusing second language and the arts. PS 2005 will foster an environment where students, parents, staff, and the community are partners in the educational process and achievement of all children."

Curriculum Focus
Horizons Community High School
Wyoming, MI
School status: In operation
Year of opening: 1994

"We believe that people are empowered by their independent use of information technologies and that they are united by opportunities to share resources and communicate in our local and global communities. In this Information Age, it is essential that Horizons commit to preparing its students to work in an evolving, information-centered, global community. Given the rapid pace of technological change and the growth of information technologies in all aspects of our lives, it is critical that students become familiar with the tools of information technology. All students and staff must be competent in using these tools to obtain information, to communicate, and to solve problems."

Customer Focus
EduPreneurship Student Center
Scottsdale, AZ
School Status: In operation
Year of Opening: 1995

"EduPreneurship is dedicated to providing children with an education that will enable them to be successful in today's complex society. Creating a learning environment that is relevant, active, and product-oriented to ensure our children stay turned on and tuned in is essential to the educational process. We believe in practicing the precepts of a democratic society by students holding themselves accountable for their own actions thus preparing them to be good citizens."

Outcomes and Goals
Lowell Middlesex Academy
Dallas, TX
School status: In operation
Year of opening: 1998

"The mission of Lowell Middlesex Academy is to enable students to achieve academic, social, and career success by providing a supportive community that identifies, encourages, and develops each student's interests and abilities. The college campus environment enables students to discover the wide variety of opportunities open to them and foster a sense of responsibility for their own education. Upon graduating from the Academy, each student will have:

- A high school diploma
- A clearly demonstrated set of academic skills
- Experience in the workplace and in community service
- A clear awareness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens
- A personal development plan for the years beyond high school"

C. Core Founding Group and Accessing Experts

Suggestions

- Discuss case studies and different scenarios as examples, when applicable
- Address "burn-out" issues; how to keep energy level high; how to share the tasks
- Use presentation cartoons to keep mood light and spirits high
- Allow time for networking
- Discuss the necessity of team members forming a strong relationship as a cohesive unit
- Suggest participants look into their community for "experts" who would like to volunteer their time

Skills Inventory

(For use with Core Founding Group and Accessing Experts section, pp. 26–34)

Training Objective

To identify the core founding group's skills, needs, and obstacles

This activity is best suited for pre-operational and operational charter school leaders and small groups.

Materials Needed

1. Large sheets of paper
2. Pens
3. Core founding group skills inventory worksheet for everyone
4. Take-home handout: How Do We Choose the Best Consultant?

Instructions

1. Using the large sheets of paper, map the community and school assets (i.e., personally, locally, and globally). Begin with the school at the center and work your way out into the community.
2. Participants should use the worksheet to identify areas of expertise within the core founding group and match the group members to the skills/needs column. As a trainer, use probing questions: Who in the community can do what? What do you need to start a school? Core founding groups need to look at the whole environment.
3. Develop an action plan to begin forming relationships with those identified. An action plan can help turn dreams into reality and also help prioritize tasks. While groups are doing this, ask them to revisit their vision and mission statements.
4. Groups may want to do some long-range planning in order to identify roles and responsibilities.

Tool I: Core Founding Group Skills Inventory[2]

Insert your core founding group's names in the columns and add areas of expertise in the rows as fits your situation. Where do you need more assistance? What is your plan for obtaining more help?

Core Founding Group Members ⇨ **Skill ⇩**									
Community/Public Relations									
Curriculum Development									
Financial Planning/Management									
Fund Raising/Grant Writing									
Instructional Practices									
Knowledge of School District									
Legal									
Management and Leadership									
Organization Development									
Parent Relations									
Politics									
Real Estate									
Special Education									
Staffing and Personnel									
Standards and Assessment									
Teaching Experience									
Writing									
Other Areas:									

2 Adapted from Premack, E. (1998). Appendix C: Development team and board expertise. In *Charter school development guide: California edition* (Rev. ed., p. 121).

Tool II: How Do We Choose the Best Consultant?[3]

What are the steps in choosing a consultant?

1. Identify the scope of the project and confirm the need for a consultant
2. Outline the tasks you want the consultant to perform
3. Prepare a written description of the project scope and timetable
4. Search for potential consultants
5. Request proposals from individuals or firms
6. Evaluate the proposals and check references/previous clients
7. Choose a consultant and enter into a written agreement

How should you begin?

Have a clear understanding of what work you want done and what type of services you need. Are you looking for temporary help to support your staff during periods of peak demand, or are you in need of someone on a more permanent basis?

Where can you find a consultant?

- Word of mouth is best—ask your board members, parents, friends, and other charter school leaders for referrals
- Professional associations (i.e., National Society of Fund Raising Executives, Public Relations Society of America, Association of Executive Search Consultants)
- Interview two or three consultants before you hire

What criteria should be used in selecting a consultant?

- Balance the importance of experience and quality with your budgetary needs.
- Does the consultant have the appropriate experience and qualifications?
- Does he or she understand the goals of the project?
- Can he or she complete the project on time and within budget?
- Does he or she ask creative questions about the organization and the project?
- Do previous clients give favorable reports on their working relationships with the consultant?

3 Developed by National Center for Nonprofit Boards (n.d.). *How do we choose the best consultant?* [Frequently asked question]

What should be included in a contract or letter of agreement?

- Can be prepared by either party; reviewed by attorney
- Describe scope of project
- Outline tasks involved
- Describe the reporting system
- Specify the nature of the final product (written report, oral presentation, combination)
- Set timetable
- Establish the fee and payment schedule

How can you promote a successful working relationship with a consultant?

- Clarity, candor, mutual respect
- Clear expectations before project begins
- Adherence to the terms in the agreement
- A well-defined reporting system, usually stipulating that the consultant works through the executive director
- Open communication in person and by telephone, including checkpoints for measuring progress such as interim reports or regular meetings
- Follow up at the end of the project to let the consultant know the impact of his or her work on the organization

Should board members serve as paid consultants to the organization?

- This can raise potential for conflict of interest
- Board members can help the organization choose consultants from the fields with which they are familiar

Additional Activity

Awareness session: Mixed groups with a variety of stakeholders. Stakeholders can play a role other than their own to understand the other roles involved in starting a charter school.

D. Application and Renewal

Suggestions

- Give practical checklists (i.e., Accomplished, In Progress, Needs to Be Addressed)
- Obtain a copy of state charter law or resources for reference
- Work *with* the group, not for them
- Help people focus on what it is they know and where they can look for outside assistance
- Alternative resources/expertise list can be encouraged as a means to broaden support
- Discuss the importance of multiple individuals working on the application in order to make it the best possible application
- Recommend talking to a charter school leader who has been through the process
- Suggest the possibility of hiring a consultant to assist with the process

Components of an Application

(For use with Application and Renewal section, pp. 35–40)

Training Objective

For pre-operational and operational founders and developers to network with those founders and developers who have "been there, done that."

Possible sessions include:

1. A panel of "seasoned" founders and developers having a large-group discussion about what is involved in a great application; or
2. Divide participants into small groups, mixing those who are new to application writing and those who have experience. Allow time for the groups to brainstorm about what is involved in a good application.

Materials Needed

1. Large sheets of paper (for both small- and large-group discussion)
2. Pens
3. Take-home handout: Key Components of a Great Application worksheet

Instructions

1. Small groups: Facilitate networking and brainstorming between "seasoned" founders and new founders to discuss what is involved in a good application. Large group: Trainer will facilitate a group discussion of what is involved in a good application.
2. Participants should record the information discussed on chart packs for all groups to view.

Tool I: Key Components of a Great Application

Requirements for charter school applications vary by state. It is recommended that you refer to your state application guidelines when completing your application. The following is a list of recommended components for all charter school applications. Some of these components may apply to your situation more than others do.

This worksheet is designed to help pre-operational schools develop an application and charter, and help operational schools refine and revise their charter.

✔	Application Components		Due Date	Lead Person
	Clear mission statement			
	• Outline of educational theory and its foundation	Description of the education program to be used		
	• Outline of teaching approach			
	• Identify sources of curriculum			
	• Description of standards and goals for the students and programmatic standards and goals for the staff and school			
	• What are the specific goals for the students; are they aligned with vision?			
	• How will students be assessed?			
	• Is the assessment system clear and valid, and does it correspond to applicable state standards and requirements?			
	Budget proposal			
	Governance and/or organizational model			
	Personnel policies including hiring and firing			
	Student admission and discipline policies			
	Facilities information			
	Statement of why the school is needed/desired			
	Insurance (if applicable)			
	Compliance with state and federal regulations			
	Accountability (curriculum, standards, assessment, evaluation)			
	Reference to a predetermined monitoring and renewal process			

E. Facilities and Financing

Suggestions

- Keep in mind that these two topics are a sensitive area for most charter schools and are often the most difficult topics to conquer.
- Suggest they look in unusual areas of their town or city for a facility. There may be a space for lease in a place they have never thought of looking (i.e., a mall). Remind the audience that they need to use their creativity to find a facility.

Dreams into Reality

(For use with Facilities and Financing section, pp. 41–55)

Training Objective

To identify resources available in the community to help create your dream school.

This activity is best suited for pre-operational charter school leaders and small groups.

Materials Needed

1. Large sheets of paper
2. Sticky notes
3. Pens
4. Take-home handout: Facilities worksheet

Instructions

1. Write down your school's vision and mission to keep in mind during the activity.
2. Sketch and label a "dream school" using the sticky notes and large sheets of paper (exercise facility, faculty lounge, large office space, etc.). Write one word on each sticky note and begin building the school.
3. Do a rough estimate of the cost of your dream school. If you are outside the budget, begin to downsize as needed or brainstorm to come up with other resources.
4. Allow time for the entire group to network and share.

Tool II: Facilities Worksheet

Checklist of information to obtain regarding charter school facilities			
	Item	Contact Agency	Person Responsible
Federal and State Codes; Local Ordinances	• ADA compliance		
	• Fire safety compliance		
	• Building codes		
	• Land-use zoning and other regulations		
	• Other local ordinances		
	Resources for loans, financing		
	Contacts for city building inspectors		
	Real estate agents (renting and leasing specifics)		
	Insurance (property and liability)		
	Janitorial services		

F. Legal Status Issues

Suggestions

- Keep in mind that legal issues are difficult to grasp and understand for the layperson. The trainer may want to have an attorney present during the session to answer questions and explain complicated processes.
- Conduct a needs assessment of your audience (i.e., teachers may not deal with non-profit).
- Survey audience to determine where participants are in the process (i.e., pre-operational, operational, five years).
- Keep in mind that experienced charter starters will deal more with troubleshooting, specific cases, and avoiding potential problems.

Additional Activities

- Consider doing a troubleshooting/potential problems session to get through most of the problem areas of legal issues.
- Participants can share "war stories."
- "Charter Starters 101" vs. "Charter Starters 501" to help at both pre-operational and operational charter school leaders. Not all leaders are going through the same process at the same time.

Workbook 2: Regulatory Issues

A. Civil Rights

Suggestions

- Use resources of local school manuals and your school district attorney
- Use your regional Office for Civil Rights
- Use your regional Equity Assistance Center
- Clarify and identify terminology (i.e., "equity")
- Assess level of understanding
- Identify areas of concern
- Provide information and sources about federal funds and federal requirements

Assessing Familiarity with Laws and Acts

(For use with Civil Rights section, pp. 1–16)

Training Objective

To assess participant familiarity with regulatory laws and acts.

To explain specific laws and acts as needed.

This activity is best suited for large groups.

Materials Needed

1. Large sheets of paper with names of laws and acts spaced around the room
2. 12 red, 12 yellow, and 12 green dots for each participant

Red = I don't know anything Yellow = Know some Green = Very familiar

Instructions

1. (a) Put the names of each of the following laws and acts on a large piece of paper. Space them around the room. Ask participants to tell you their comfort level with each law or act by placing colored dots on each paper.

or

(b) List the following laws and acts on two or three large sheets of paper and allow a column for participants to place red, yellow, or green dots in the column.

or

(c) List the following laws and acts in a table format with columns labeled: "I don't know anything"; "Know some"; and "Very familiar." Pass the sheet out as a survey and ask participants to mark the most appropriate column.

2. Ask for volunteers who put up green dots to explain their understanding of each law and act. You may supplement their explanations with additional information, if needed.

Law or Act	Red, Yellow, or Green
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964	
Lau v. *Nichols* (1973)	
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964	
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972	
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)	
Improving America's Schools Act of 1994	
Goals 2000: Educate America Act	
Age Discrimination Act of 1975	
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990	
Section 504 of the Rehabilitative Act of 1973	
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	
Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)	

Specific Equity Challenges—Circle Walk

(For use with Civil Rights section, pp. 1–16)

Training Objective

To raise awareness of the various equity issues that arise in charter school settings.

To increase understanding of charter schools' obligations in relation to equity issues.

This activity is well-suited for large groups. There must be enough people to make two circles. This activity requires a large open space.

Materials Needed

1. Watch
2. Large space in which to form two circles, one inside the other
3. Discussion questions listed below

Instructions

1. Divide the participants into two equal groups and form two circles, one inside the other one. Ask the inside circle to face outward and the outside circle to face inward. (Each inside person should then be paired with one outside person.)
   (a) Decide on the number of minutes to allot for discussion of each question. Pose the first question and ask each pair to discuss the question until you stop them. At the end of the time period, ask the outside circle to move one person to the right and ask the two who are now paired up to discuss the second question. Continue until all the questions are discussed.
      (1) The Charter Starters Workbook 2 states: "Ideally, advocates envision charter schools as laboratories of innovation, providing districts with successful ideas while offering students unique educational opportunities." However, there are some concerns about the effect of charter schools on public schools. **What are some of the possible impacts that charter schools may have on public schools, and what are some of the related equity concerns?**
      (2) **What are the equity issues regarding the selection of students to attend charter schools?**
      (3) **What are some important equity concerns regarding the requirement of parental involvement?**

(4) In Charter Starter Workbook 2, we learn that "58 percent of all charter schools report a lack of start-up funds as a significant obstacle to charter implementation; 41 percent cite inadequate operating funds as a significant obstacle." **What are the sources of charter school funding and what are some equity issues that arise due to funding limitations?**

(5) All charter schools are held accountable for their students' performance. **What are the challenges that arise regarding accountability when dealing with equity issues?**

(6) According to Charter Starters Workbook 2: "Many states exempt charter schools from teacher certification requirements and collective bargaining agreements." **What are some of the issues that arise related to teacher certification?**

(7) Charter schools are not exempt from any special education requirements. **What equity issues may arise in relation to special education?**

(b) Depending on the amount of time available, you may choose to debrief after the circle discussion is complete and summarize the concerns and issues related to each question. You may supplement the summary with additional information, if necessary.

You may adjust the time for this activity by:

(2) Changing the number of minutes each question is discussed

(3) Eliminating some questions

(4) Eliminating or adding the debriefing component

Problem-Solving Scenarios

(For use with Civil Rights and Special Education sections, pp. 1–34)

Training Objective

To understand the types of equity concerns that arise locally.

To develop skills in addressing equity issues.

For this activity, participants must already have an awareness of the specific equity issues faced by charter schools. If the brainstorming activity results in few examples and reveals that participants have a limited understanding of equity concerns, the Equity Challenges Circle Walk may be used first to develop awareness of equity issues.

Materials Needed

Cards to write scenarios on, paper, markers

Instructions

1. Brainstorm several scenarios of problems that may arise concerning equity issues. Following are a few examples of possible problems.

   Special Education Examples:

   - ✓ Parent wants a psychiatric exam for his or her child
   - ✓ Parent wants special equipment for his or her child
   - ✓ Parent wants a special program within charter school
   - ✓ A child is disruptive and needs assistance, but parents refuse to have him or her tested

   Equity Concern Examples:

   - ✓ Charter school student population does not reflect the district demographics
   - ✓ Parent participation is required, effectively eliminating some children whose parents cannot, for various reasons, participate at the school
   - ✓ A parent has filed a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights claiming her child has been harassed and the school has done nothing about it, even though it had been reported to a teacher
   - ✓ Some charter school teachers are not certified, causing frustration at the district level

2. From the brainstormed suggestions, choose several (depending on the number of participants and groups desired) that would be appropriate for this exercise.

3. Brainstorm the people who would be involved in each of the chosen scenarios (parent, student, teachers, administrator, school psychological examiner, etc.).

4. Divide participants into small groups and assign a scenario to each group.

   (a) Ask each group to problem solve their scenario and address the issues involved.

   (b) Ask each group to role play their scenario and solution. Have group members play specific roles (i.e., parent, teacher, student) and act out their issue.

Variation: Ask participants to act out the scenario two times. The first time, act out the scenario if it were to play out in a destructive manner. Then, act out a more constructive approach to the situation.

Additional Activities

Provide a profile or case study of a school. Ask participants to assess whether this school is using equitable practices.

B. Special Education

Suggestions

- Need to drive home basic obligations and consequences:
  - — Settlements
  - — Closures/fines
  - — Information on regulation violations
- Gather samples of IEP and accommodation plans from local districts to use in training
- Discuss advocates
- Distinguish between Section 504 and special education
- Discuss least-restrictive environment

Include sample forms and timelines gathered from local sources.

Developing an IEP

(For use with Special Education section, pp. 17–34)

Training Objective

To gain understanding of the planning process in addressing special needs.

To consider the needs of both physical and mental impairments.

To increase awareness of the requirements for schools in addressing special needs.

Materials Needed

1. Special Education section of *Charter Schools Leadership Training Academy Workbook*
2. Tool II, Federal Definitions of Special Education Disability Categories, and Tool III, Suggested Components of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in the Special Education section; Tool IV: Program Options from the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to the Most Restrictive Environment
3. Paper and markers
4. Sample IEP plans gathered from local districts

Instructions

Divide the participants into two groups. If possible, place at least one person with knowledge of the topic in each group. Each group is to develop a plan that addresses a special need. Part way through the exercise, you may want to hand out sample IEP plans as guidance for the group. Have each group share its plan with the larger group.

1. Group I: Develop an IEP

(a) Ask the group members to think about their experiences with students with mental impairments. Based on their experience with a variety of students, ask the group to make up a profile of a special education student with a mental impairment. Describe student's characteristics with enough detail that you could make decisions about his or her educational needs.

(b) Use Tool II and Tool III in the Special Education section, information from the Special Education section, and expertise within the group to design an IEP for the student.

2. **Group II: Develop an IEP**

(a) Ask the group members to think about their experiences with students with physical impairments. Based on their experience with a variety of students, ask the group to make up a profile of a student with a physical impairment. Describe student characteristics with enough detail that you could make decisions about his or her educational needs.

(b) Use Tool II and Tool III in the Special Education section, information from the Special Education section, and expertise within the group to design an IEP for the student. Include the specific accommodations needed for this student.

Tool II: Federal Definitions of Special Education Disability Categories[4]

Specific learning disability: A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations; this includes perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia, but does not include learning problems resulting from visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, or from mental retardation.

Seriously emotionally disturbed: Exhibition of behavior disorders over a long period of time that adversely affects educational performance; this includes an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; inappropriate types of behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances; a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Speech impaired: Communication disorders, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, and language or voice impairments, that adversely affect educational performance.

Mentally retarded: Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning with concurrent deficits in adaptive behavior that were manifested in the development period and that adversely affect educational performance.

Visually impaired: A visual impairment that, even with correction, adversely affects educational performance, including students who are partially sighted or completely blinded.

Hard of hearing: A hearing impairment, permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects educational performance but that is not included in the deaf category.

Deaf: A hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, which adversely affects educational performance.

Orthopedically impaired: A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects educational performance, including those caused by congenital anomaly, disease, or other causes.

4 Wagner, M., Newman, L., D'Amici, R., Jay, E.D., Butler-Nalin, P., Mendin, C., & Cox, L. (1991). *Youth with disabilities: How are they doing? The first comprehensive report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study on Special Education Students.*

Other health impaired: Limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems that adversely affect educational performance (includes autistic students).

Multiple handicapped: Concomitant impairments, the combination of which causes such severe educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments (does not include deaf/blind).

Deaf/blind: Concomitant hearing and visual iinpairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for deaf or blind students.

Tool III: Suggested Components of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)[5]

What Is an IEP?*

The IEP is a written plan that describes a child's abilities and needs, and the placement and services designed to meet the child's unique needs. Students with disabilities must have IEPs before they can receive special education services. This IEP must be implemented as soon as possible after the IEP meeting.

If the child is found to be eligible for special education services, the IEP should contain:

- Annual goals and short-term objectives focusing on the child's current level of performance.
- The services that the child will receive.
- When services will begin, how often they will be provided, and for how long.
- The instructional program(s) where these services will be delivered.
- The amount of time the child will spend in general education. If the child is not educated completely in general education, it should state why.
- How the school will measure the child's progress.

5 Adapted from the Los Angeles Unified School District, 1997.
*NOTE: These components are specific to this district and may change depending on your state charter law.

IEP Team Participants should include:

- Parent
- At least one regular education teacher
- At least one special education teacher or provider
- One LEA representative who is qualified and knowledgeable
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results
- The child, whenever appropriate[6]

Children with disabilities should attend the school they would ordinarily attend if they were not in special education. This requirement may be waived when a student's IEP requires it, and states why. Parents will receive a copy of the IEP at the IEP meeting and have the right to disagree or agree with any part of the IEP. The school is required to obtain parental consent before the child receives special education services.

6 Adopted from the 1997 IDEA Amendments, 1999.

Tool IV: Program Options from the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to the Most Restrictive Environment[7]

Program	Description
General education classes	Whenever appropriate, students with disabilities will be educated in general education classes. In addition, whenever possible, they will attend the school they would ordinarily attend if they were not in special education.
General education classes with consultation	In order for students with disabilities to be appropriately educated in general education classes, it may be necessary for teachers to consult with special education personnel to receive guidance and support.
General education classes with designated instruction and services (DIS)	Designated instruction and services (DIS) assist students with disabilities to benefit from their general education program. Some examples of DIS are language and speech services, adapted physical education, counseling, and physical and occupational therapy.
General education classes and resource specialist program	A resource specialist program provides instruction and services to students with disabilities assigned to the general education classroom for the majority of the school day. The goal of the resource specialist program is to enable students with disabilities to succeed in the general education environment.
General education classes and special day classes	Depending on their needs, students with disabilities may be educated in general education classes for part of the school day and special day classes for the other part of the school day.
Special day classes	Special day classes serve students who, because of their disabilities, cannot participate in general education classes for a majority of the school day. These classes are provided on general education sites.
Special schools/centers	Students are enrolled in special schools/centers when it is determined that the nature and severity of their disabilities require more intensive educational instruction. As appropriate, students enrolled in special schools interact with their general education peers through academic, nonacademic, and extracurricular activities.
Nonpublic schools	When no appropriate public education program is available, a student with disabilities may be placed in a nonpublic school under contract with the district.
Home or hospital	Students with a verified medical or emotional condition that prevents them from attending school may receive services on a temporary basis in the home or a hospital.
State residential schools	State residential schools provide comprehensive assessment and services for students with visual and/or hearing disabilities.

7 Adapted from the Los Angeles Unified School District, 1997.

Additional Activities

- Use guest speakers or a panel to talk about compliance issues, "musts" for each law, and how to provide services.
- Develop scenarios or have participants brainstorm scenarios of various disabilities/handicaps. Ask participants to suggest possible accommodations.
- Prompt a discussion about who is involved in the development of the IEP.
  - Parent
  - Teacher
  - Program specialists
  - Psychologist, and so forth
- Use sample policies in training sessions.
- Distinguish which statutes cover charters and which ones do not.
- Brainstorm resources. Identify who to call regarding information about laws and policies. Include school board as resource. May want to provide a list of resources.
- List pertinent Web sites related to specific regulatory issues.
- Share participant addresses and phone numbers as resource.

Terms and Definitions

(For use with Special Education and Other Federal Regulations sections, pp. 17–45)

Training Objective

To be familiar with special education terms.

To become familiar with other federal regulations.

Materials Needed

1. Copy of terms and definitions
2. Scissors
3. Copy of Tool I: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms and the Other Federal Regulations section (for use in debriefing, if needed) from Workbook 2

Instructions

1. Make a copy of the following sections listing terms and definitions. Cut the terms and definitions apart so that only one term or definition is on one piece of paper.
2. Have each person draw a piece of paper with a term or definition.
3. Ask each person to find the other person with the matching term or definition and discuss the implications or think of an example of the term.
4. When pairs have finished discussing, ask each pair to share their term and definition as well as their example and any implications with the entire group.

Other Federal Regulations Terms

Family Education, Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)	Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)	The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988
Equal Access Act	Drug-Free Schools and Campuses
Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA)	

Other Federal Regulation Definitions

A federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. The law applies to all schools receiving federal funds. Requires the school district to:

- Grant parents and students over 18 access to education records and restricts disclosure of the information without their consent
- Provide a parent an opportunity to seek correction of the record they believe to be inaccurate or misleading
- With some exceptions, obtain the written permission of a parent before disclosing information contained in the student's education record.

The privacy of special education records is protected by this act. Any participating agency or institution that collects, maintains, or uses personally identifiable information about students with disabilities must protect the privacy of these special education records.

Requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, and for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if there are at least 50 employees within 75 miles. It is enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor. Family and medical reasons include:

- The birth or adoption of a child
- The care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious condition
- The employee's own serious health condition

*NOTE: See your state law to find out what is applicable to your school.

Other Federal Regulation Definitions—continued

A law passed in 1984 that requires public schools to allow students to meet before and after classes for religious purposes, including prayer. The law applies to all public schools that receive federal financial assistance and addresses student free speech rights, including religious rights.	In general, extends to all employers and their employees in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and all other territories under federal government jurisdiction. An employer is any "person engaged in a business affecting commerce who has employees, but does not include the United States or any state or political subdivision of a State." The general duty clause states that each employer "shall furnish . . . a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees."
Regulates employment relationships in four areas: minimum wages, overtime, child labor, and equal pay.	Requires federal grant recipients to adopt a policy that prohibits the use or possession of drugs in the workplace.
	Requires recipients of federal funds to adopt and enforce a drug prevention program for both students and employees.

Special Education Terms

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Local Education Agency (LEA)
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975)
Direct services	Related services
Learning disability	Indirect services
Disability	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Least restrictive environment (LRE)	Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
Due process clause	State Education Agency (SEA)

Special Education Definitions

Prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities and requires affirmative action, including mandatory accommodations, to ensure that discrimination does not occur in employment, public access to facilities and services, transportation, communication, and government services.	Requires recipients of federal funding under the Act to comply with procedural and due process requirements to ensure that children with disabilities are provided with a free appropriate public education.
Disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language; may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.	Services in which special education personnel (including special education teachers, speech and language pathologists, and other professionals) work with students to remediate difficulties or to provide enrichment or acceleration.
The part of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that forbids states from depriving anyone of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.	Medical, social, or learning difficulty that interferes significantly with an individual's normal growth and development.
Educational setting as much like the regular classroom as possible.	Local school district

Special Education Definitions—continued

First compulsory special education law; mandates a free and appropriate education for all students with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21—a.k.a. Public Law 94-142.	Supplemental services provided by trained personnel to help a student benefit from special education; these activities include psychological testing and counseling, occupational therapy, school health services, and transportation.
Services provided to regular classroom teachers and others to help them meet the needs of exceptional students; also called consultative services.	Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by any agency that receives federal financial assistance.
A written document that includes (1) a statement of the student's present levels of functioning, (2) a statement of annual goals and short-term objectives for achieving those goals, (3) a statement of services to be provided and the extent of regular programming, (4) the start date and expected duration of services, and (5) evaluation procedures and criteria for monitoring progress.	A state-level educational administration or organization (i.e., state departments of education, Office of Public Instruction)

C. Other Federal Regulations

Some charter schools will develop policies pertaining to the federal laws in order to remain in compliance with them. Developing policy is an important step in the process of compliance. It allows charter schools to not only know the law, but also to go through the implementation step to ensure compliance.

See Tool I for a list of terms and acronyms in this section.

Family Education, Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. The law applies to all schools receiving federal funds. FERPA requires the school district to:

- Grant parents and students over 18 access to education records and restricts disclosure of the information without their consent
- Provide parents an opportunity to seek correction of the record they believe to be inaccurate or misleading
- With some exceptions, obtain the written permission of a parent before disclosing information contained in the student's education record

The privacy of special education records is protected by FERPA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Any participating agency or institution that collects, maintains, or uses personally identifiable information about students with disabilities must protect the privacy of these special education records.[8]

Equal Access Act

The Equal Access Act is a law passed in 1984 that requires public schools to allow students to meet before and after classes for religious purposes, including prayer. The law applies to all public schools that receive federal financial assistance and addresses student free speech rights, including religious rights.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

The FLSA regulates employment relationships in four areas: minimum wages, overtime, child labor, and equal pay.[9]

8 For more information, see nces.ed.gov/pubs97/p97527/SEC2.SUM.htm.
9 For more information, see www.stw.ed.gov

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)[10]

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, and for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if there are at least 50 employees within 75 miles. FMLA is enforced by the U.S. Department of Labor. Family and medical reasons include:

- The birth or adoption of a child
- The care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious condition
- The employee's own serious health condition

NOTE: See your state law to find out what is applicable to your school.

Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA)

In general, coverage of the Act extends to all employers and their employees in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and all other territories under federal government jurisdiction. As defined by the Act, an employer is any "person engaged in a business affecting commerce who has employees, but does not include the United States or any state or political subdivision of a state." The general duty clause of the Act states that each employer "shall furnish ... a place of employment which is free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees." [11]

NOTE: For OSHA requirements, check with your state department of health or your local health department.

The Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988

The Act requires federal grant recipients to adopt a policy that prohibits the use or possession of drugs in the workplace.

Drug Free Schools and Campuses

Requires recipients of federal funds to adopt and enforce a drug prevention program for both students and employees.

10 For more information, see www.dol.gov/public/regs/compliance/whd/whdfs28.htm.
11 U.S. Department of Labor. (1997). *Small business handbook: Safety and health standards.*

Tool I: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities and requires affirmative action, including mandatory accommodations, to ensure that discrimination does not occur in employment, public access to facilities and services, transportation, communication, and government services.

Direct services: Services in which special education personnel (including special education teachers, speech and language pathologists, and other professionals) work with students to remediate difficulties or to provide enrichment or acceleration.

Disability: Medical, social, or learning difficulty that interferes significantly with an individual's normal growth and development.

Due process clause: The part of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that forbids states from depriving anyone of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975): First compulsory special education law; mandates a free and appropriate education for all students with disabilities between the ages of three and 21 (also known as Public Law 94-142).

Indirect services: Services provided to regular classroom teachers and others to help them meet the needs of exceptional students; also called consultative services.

Individualized education plan (IEP): A written document that includes (1) a statement of the student's present levels of functioning, (2) a statement of annual goals and short-term objectives for achieving those goals, (3) a statement of services to be provided and the extent of regular programming, (4) the start date and expected duration of services, and (5) evaluation procedures and criteria for monitoring progress.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Requires recipients of federal funding under the Act to comply with procedural and due process requirements to ensure that children with disabilities are provided with a free, appropriate public education.

Learning disability: Disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language; may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

Least restrictive environment: Educational setting as much like the regular classroom as possible.

Local Education Agency (LEA): Local school district.

Related services: Supplemental services provided by trained personnel to help a student benefit from special education; these activities include psychological testing and counseling, occupational therapy, school health services, and transportation.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by any agency that receives federal financial assistance.

State Education Agency (SEA): State-level educational administration or organization (state departments of education, Office of Public Instruction).

Additional Activities

- Start off with people's perceptions of regulations by asking participants to:
  - Discuss "what is regulation?"
  - Brainstorm "what regulations do you think apply to your school?"
- Provoke thoughtful discussion regarding regulations:
  - Why do we have each of them?
  - What purpose do they serve?
  - Where do they come from?
- Create some rules and regulations and then ask participants how they would carry these out.
- Utilize a panel that includes people who are knowledgeable about the topic and are able to answer questions.
- Conduct an open discussion on nontraditional methods and practices. "Think outside the box" regarding issues (such as safety). Discuss the balancing of other people's experience in traditional world with the practice of "thinking outside the box."
- Develop locally appropriate tools to learn regulations such as:
  - Interactive games
  - Word searches

  - Bingo
  - Crossword puzzles
- Provide a mini-lecture on specific laws and regulations.
- Create a dialogue session regarding essential rules and needs.
- Hold a discussion on student records and the issues involved.

D. State Regulatory Issues

Suggestions

- Determine state-specific laws and regulations.
- Use your state charter association and the state education network as resources.
- Summarize extensive state information on a handout.
- Discuss waivers. Point for clarification: Why waive something?
- Emphasize hard, factual information and the need to comply with regulations.

Activities

- Utilize panel discussions, preferably with panel members from expert, established charters.
- Provide a district policies dialogue session addressing essential rules and needs. Discuss what applies to charter schools and what does not.
- Provide a jigsaw activity so that different people become experts in different regulations.
- Develop local state case studies to use as specific examples in training.
- Hold a session on new models addressing issues such as:
  - Social contracts
  - Facilities
  - Co-op ownership
- Stimulate a discussion of risk taking and "new thinking."

Workbook 3: Assessment and Accountability

A. Accountability

Suggestions

- Be aware of state-specific issues regarding assessment and accountability.
- Help participants think of the assessment and accountability process as a helpful tool, not something you just "have to do."
- Clarify meaning of "assessment" and "accountability" (use workbook as a guide).
- Provide resources for participants.
- Assessment and accountability need to be tailored to beliefs, values, philosophy of school and those involved.
- Help participants to always keep their vision and mission in mind.
- Consider that the schools must be accountable to various audiences: state, district, parents, community.
- Accountability and assessment need to be considered from a school's conception and continue throughout operation. They cannot just be afterthoughts.
- Have participants leave the training with a plan regarding accountability, assessment, or both.

Post Your Success

(For use with Accountability section, pp. 1–49)

Training Objectives

To clarify how participants define success for their school.

To conceptualize how to measure their school's success.

To develop methods to show their school's success to relevant stakeholders.

This activity is best suited for all charter school leaders in small or large groups.

Materials Needed

1. Sticky notes
2. Pens/markers

Instructions

1. Group participants according to school.
2. Have participants individually answer a series of questions on sticky notes.
3. The first question is, "How do you define success (for your school)?"
4. Participants post their responses on a wall and then together cluster the responses into appropriate categories.
5. The second question is, "Who do you need to convince (that you were successful) under each category/cluster?"
6. The final question is, "What tools/instruments do you need to show success in each category/cluster?"
7. Have group discuss the various responses and develop a plan for their school.

Pre-Arrival Worksheet

(For use with Accountability section, pp. 1–49)

Training Objectives

To prompt participants to think about issues of accountability for their school before attending training.

This activity is best suited for all charter school leaders in small or large groups.

Materials Needed

Pre-Arrival Worksheet (sent out ahead of time)

Instructions

1. Have participants prepare ahead of time regarding four areas of accountability by completing worksheet. They will identify how they are/will be accountable and identify state requirements in the following four areas:
   - Academic
   - Fiscal
   - Rule Compliance
   - Public/Parental
2. Have participants work with others from their school to discuss each of the sections they prepared.
3. Have each school group report to the larger group and share ideas of how their schools can be accountable.

Pre-Arrival Worksheet

	What are the state requirements for your school?	How will your school be accountable?
ACADEMIC		
FISCAL		
RULE COMPLIANCE		
PUBLIC/PARENTAL		

Accountability Plan

(For use with Accountability section, pp. 1–49)

Training Objectives

To develop an accountability plan for each school.

This activity is best suited for pre-operational charter school leaders in small or large groups.

Materials Needed

1. Workbook 3, Tool I: Guidelines for Preparing an Accountability Plan
2. Workbook 3, Tool III: Sample Accountability Plan (as a reference)
3. Pens/pencils

Instructions

1. Group participants according to school.
2. Ask each group to develop an accountability plan (or a section of it) for their school, utilizing Tool I as a guide.
3. Ask each group to share the main elements of their plan with the large group.

Tool I: Guidelines for Preparing an Accountability Plan

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Introduction

Why Accountability?

In granting charters to a number of schools, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enabled these schools to pursue their missions free from several state regulations. However, along with deregulation, the Commonwealth also stated high expectations for accountability from its charter schools. The Secretary of Education mandated that each school submit an Accountability Plan at the end of its FIRST year of operation and state progress annually thereafter in Annual Reports. The Accountability Plan, which constitutes a contract between the school and the state, establishes the criteria by which the state will hold the school accountable over the life of its charter. According to Technical Advisory 96-1, which lays out the terms of accountability, each charter school must do four things:

- Develop and pursue its own clear, concrete, and measurable school performance objectives
- Measure and document progress toward these objectives
- Use credible student assessment tools for annually tracking student performance
- Report its objectives, progress toward them, and student assessment results, along with other information in its annual report

Although the emphasis of the Accountability Plan tends to be on accountability to the state, the plan can also have multiple uses for the school and community, such as: accountability to the school community; a tool for continuous improvement, based on information, data, and feedback; and a means of proving success. Developing the plan is an opportunity for the school to revisit its mission and its objectives with the school community. It may be helpful, although it is not necessary, to use an outside facilitator to guide the school through this process.

Structure of This Document

This document provides guidelines to help charter schools prepare their Accountability Plans, using the following format:

Topic 1. Accountability Plan Common Format
See Section II

Topic 2. Accountability Questions and Operations
See Section III

Topic 3. Accountability Plan Elements: Explanations, Clues, Examples
See Section IV

Topic 4. Accountability Work and Example Sheets
See Section V

Accountability Plan Common Format

The Accountability Plan Format is organized around measurable performance objectives, including both student performance objectives and school performance objectives. For each objective there are expectations, strategies for attainment, progress indicators, measurement tools, and a description of current status. The format of the plan looks like the outline below.

Measurable Student Performance Objectives

Student Performance Objective #1
- Expectation(s)
- Strategy(ies) for attainment
- Progress indicators
- Measurement tool
- Current status

Student Performance Objective #2
- (Etc.)

Measurable School Performance Objectives

School Performance Objective #1
- Expectation(s)
- Strategy(ies) for attainment
- Progress indicators
- Measurement tool
- Current status

School Performance Objective #2
- (Etc.)

Accountability Questions and Operations

The development of an Accountability Plan is part of an ongoing cycle of **planning** (What are we going to do?), **action** (doing it), and **reflection** (How well did we succeed and what do we need to change?), which takes place within a school. This cycle is perpetual; reflection leads to revising plans and actions as a school moves toward achieving its objectives. The Accountability Plan is a tool for planning, action, and reflection, since each of the common format elements answers one of the key questions that guide the cycle. In the list below, the key questions are tied to the Accountability Plan operation that best answers it.

Questions for Planning, Action, and Reflection	Accountability Plan Operations
Where do we want to go?	Defining measurable performance objectives for students and school
What do we want to achieve?	Setting academic and nonacademic expectations
How will we get there?	Identifying strategies for attainment of objectives
How will we know we are making progress?	Defining progress indicators
What will we use to measure our progress?	Identifying measurement tools
Where are we now?	Describing current status

After the first year's Accountability Plan is submitted and approved, "current status" will become part of a school's Annual Report, which is due to the state August 1 each year. Thus, examining current status can become the basis for annual reflection on the school's progress toward its objectives. The following reflective questions may be appropriate:

- Have we come far enough this year?
- Can we demonstrate our progress in a credible way to those outside the school?
- If not, do we need to reconsider the strategies we are using to reach the objectives?
- Have the strategies been adequately implemented?
- Do we need to revise the strategies, reexamine our progress indicators, or think again about how to measure results?

Plan Elements: Explanations, Clues, Examples

Schools should include at least one objective for students and one performance objective for the school. Most schools will have more. At least one student performance objective must be academic; there may be nonacademic objectives as well if they are important to the mission of the school. Performance objectives answer the question: Where do we want to go?

Performance Objectives for Students and Schools

Explanation of Performance Objectives

> Performance objectives are the ultimate expectations for achievement and are always keyed to the unique elements of the school's charter. Each objective must be stated in measurable terms, but all performance objectives may not be achieved within the time period of your charter. The state will consider progress over time in evaluating schools.

Developing performance objectives requires thinking about unique elements of the school's charter and mission. Think of setting student performance objectives in terms of, "If this school succeeds, then students will ..."

Tips

- Student performance objectives are often phrased "All students will ..."
- Comparisons of student achievement should be made in terms of student growth over time or in terms of national norms, rather than with students in the district in which the charter school is located. A statement such as "Graduating students will perform at the same level as students graduating from the other Jonestown public schools" is not a valid performance objective because the two student populations are not comparable.

The examples below are illustrative ideas.

Examples

- Student Academic Performance Objective: Students will be prepared for college through proficiency of key subjects in a core curriculum, which is defined as mathematics, science, and English.
- Student Nonacademic Performance Objective: All students will learn citizenship through taking responsibility and working in teams.
- School Performance Objective: The school will be a viable organization in terms of resources, enrollment, and parent perception.

Expectations

Expectations are a more specific expression of performance objectives, stated in measurable terms. Each objective must have at least one expectation attached to it, which is attainable during the five years of the charter. Expectations answer the question: What do we want to achieve?

Explanation of Expectations

> Expectations of student academic performance state what students should know and be able to do in specific measurable terms. When referring to nonacademic student performance objectives or school performance objectives, the term "expectations" denotes what is reasonably anticipated.

Developing expectations requires "setting the bar at a high level," but one that is attainable. Think of setting expectations by asking questions such as "How many students can we really expect to reach our desired level of performance in the amount of time that they are attending this school?"

Tips

- Expectations should be measurable within the time frame of your charter.
- Expectations are often expressed quantitatively, such as "Ninety percent of students will achieve proficiency ..." or "Seventy-five percent of graduating students ..." or "By the year 2001, all students ... "
- Expectations are stronger if they include a phrase that states how they will be achieved. For example, "90 percent of students will achieve a score of 'excellent' on their exhibitions, using a well-defined rubric."

Expectations are always tied to specific performance objectives as in the examples below.

Examples

- Student Academic Expectation: One hundred percent of students are expected to meet both annual and exit objectives, determined in an individual education plan.
- Student Nonacademic Expectation: All students will become academic or nonacademic role models.
- School Expectation: The school will add a grade each year, meet enrollment projections, and maintain a waiting list.

Strategies for Attainment

Strategies are means that a school uses to meet its objectives. Strategies answer the question: How will we get there?

Explanation of Strategies

> Strategies are the means, methods, and approaches by which expectations and performance objectives are met. Many strategies are academic, but they may also be behavioral and some may involve parents and community.

Developing strategies entails examining the performance objectives and thinking about the ways that they will be achieved. Think in terms of, "In order to achieve this objective, we will use or develop these methods, instructional techniques, and/or materials."

Tips

- Performance objectives are ends; strategies are the means to the end.
- Several strategies may be needed to attain a single performance objective and strategies may serve more than one objective.
- The following is a list of frequently used strategies: specific curricula or texts; instructional approaches; student grouping; individualized learning plans; teacher professional development; outside experts in the classroom; student dress or behavior codes; periodic town meetings.

There are many strategies charter schools use to meet their objectives. The examples below are illustrative.

Examples

- School Academic Performance Strategy: Use quality core curricula, such as Reading Recovery and University of Chicago School Mathematics Project.
- Student Nonacademic Performance Strategy: Students achieving proficiency serve as academic leaders who tutor other students. Students may also serve as nonacademic leaders with responsibility for organizing certain school projects or areas.
- School Performance Strategy: The school will hold parent meetings in order to establish and reach consensus on expectations parents hold for student performance.

Progress Indicators

Progress indicators are the signposts along the road toward meeting expectations and achieving performance objectives. Progress indicators answer the question: How do we know we are making progress?

Explanation of Progress Indicators

> Progress indicators are measurable interim accomplishments that must be achieved in order to meet expectations. For every student performance objective, it is necessary to have progress indicators, although they are not always necessary for school objectives. Progress indicators are annual verification that cumulative progress is being made toward objectives.

Developing progress indicators requires thinking about the educational process and how it can be measured. Think about issues such as, "Where do we need students to be at the end of each grade to meet our expectations at graduation?"

Tips

- Progress indicators must be measurable. They are often stated numerically.
- Wherever possible, progress indicators should allow external validation.
- Progress indicators may use such words as "each year" or "at the end of two years," or they may refer to "increase" or "student progress after one year in the school."
- A single performance objective may have several progress indicators.

Progress indicators relate to expectations and performance objectives, as in the examples below.

Examples

- Student Academic Performance Progress Indicators: Annual increase in the number of students meeting expectations, according to standardized test results and performance-based measures.
- Student Nonacademic Performance Progress Indicator: Annual 5 percent increase in the number of students becoming academic and nonacademic role models each year.
- School Performance Progress Indicator: Annual 10 percent increase in applications by students and teachers; annual increase or status quo in waiting list; 20 percent annual increase in parental activities.

Measurement Tools

Measurement tools are the proof of success and answer the question: How will we know we got there?

Explanation of Measurement Tools

> Measurement tools are the means used to evaluate progress toward performance objectives. Most schools use multiple tools for measuring student and school performance, both for planning within the school and for demonstrating success to others. The key elements of any measurement tool are objectivity and credibility.

Describing measurement tools requires thinking about the best sources of evidence that are available to prove that the school is making progress toward its performance objectives. Think of including measurement tools that meet a criterion of, "This tool will prove to insiders and reasonably informed outsiders that we are accomplishing our objectives."

Tips

- Subject all measurement tools to the questions: Is this credible? Is this objective?
- Any of the following are acceptable measurement tools: standardized tests; district tests; exhibitions of proficiency and/or portfolios, as long as they are accompanied by credible rubrics; outside juries or judges; changes in discipline referrals, school attendance, or dropout rates; rate of students attending two- or four-year colleges.
- Standardized tests are not the only measurement tool for judging student achievement, but the results are extremely credible to outsiders and may be required.

It is important that each performance objective be measured by some tool that indicates demonstrable progress. The examples below give some illustrative ideas.

Examples

- Student Academic Performance Measurement: Pre- and post-Iowa tests for all students. (Use of the MEAP in grades four and eight, report cards, final examinations in English and mathematics. Performance-based assessments in science.)
- Student Nonacademic Performance Measurement: Students will earn Student Life Points through serving as a role model. These points will be tallied at the end of the year to show student progress toward becoming leaders.
- School Performance Measurement: Parent and teacher surveys, enrollment records, teacher applications, number of students on waiting list.

A report of current status is closely tied to progress indicators, which are described on an earlier page. The report of current status answers the question: Where are we now?

Explanation of Current Status

> Current status tells where the school is, in measurable terms, at the end of each academic year in meeting its objectives. In the Accountability Plan, a school may report baseline data as the current status.

Appraising current status requires honestly facing up to success and failure and saying, "This is where we are."

Tips

- At the end of the first year, current status is generally baseline, such as student scores on standardized tests at the time they enter the school. Baseline data measure the status of performance before the charter school has had any effects. It says, "We're starting here."
- After the first year, current status is tied to progress indicators. For example, if the progress indicator is that at the end of the fifth grade, all students will complete journals, then the current status report might say, "Ninety percent of students completed journals; the others have signed contracts to complete them by September."

The examples below give some illustrative ideas for reporting current status.

Examples

- Current Status or Student Academic Performance (Baseline Data): As of September 1996, 62 percent of students were below grade level in mathematics and 56 percent below grade level in reading.
- Current Status of Student Nonacademic Performance: All teachers are trained and are training students in the role model system.
- Current Status of School Performance: In 1995, we opened as a K–7 school; in 1996 we will open as a K–8 school. There were 150 teacher applications at the time the school opened. The number of students on the waiting list is currently 53.

Tool III: Sample Accountability Plan

School: Jefferson Academy Charter School
District: Jefferson County Public School District R-1
School Address: 9955 Yarrow Street
City: Broomfield State: CO Zip Code: 80021
Telephone: 438-1011
Date: June 2, 1995
Principal: E. Munier

I. School Profile (Who Are We?)

Location (check one): Urban _____ Suburban __X__ Rural _____

Student Characteristics

Number of students: District: 84,145 increasing by 1.6 percent for one year

Building: 189 increasing by 100 percent for one year

Racial/Ethnic Breakdown

American Indian: 2 Caucasian/Non-Hispanic: 178

Black: 3 Pacific Islander: 0

Asian: 2 Hispanic: 4

Special education population: 10 (identified)

Community Characteristics

Please describe your community using such factors as:

_____Socioeconomic level

_____Education level of parents

_____Mobility

_____Record of community volunteer activities

_____Participation in such programs as Aid to Dependent Children and Chapter 1

_____Family status

(Indicate which characteristics from the list above you will describe in your narrative)

Jefferson County Public School District R–1 is the largest school district in terms of student population in the state of Colorado. The county covers an area of nearly 785 square miles. The main communities in the county are: Arvada, Broomfield, Golden, Lakewood, Littleton, Westminster, and Wheat Ridge.

Jefferson Academy was organized by parents who were seeking a more traditional and fundamental approach to education for their children. The school was approved by the Jefferson County School Board in May of 1994. The first actual day of operation was August 29, 1994. The school is located in the old Juchem Elementary School site in Broomfield. The school serves 189 students, kindergarten (two half-day programs) through sixth grade. There is a substantial waiting list of well over 400 students. Jefferson Academy is sharing the Juchem site with a Jefferson County Public School preschool program.

Economic levels within the school are as follows: 1.6% < $25K; 54.6% < $50K; 32% < $75K, and 11.7% > $75K. Ninety-one percent of our parents have some college-level education, and 57.7 percent have at least a four-year college degree or greater. Mobility in our first year was 1.5 percent. Over 6,000 hours of parent volunteer hours have been served in the school's fist year. The free and reduced-price lunch program serves 50 percent of our families. Five percent of the students are staffed for special education, with an anticipated increase of 10–12 percent in staffing for the upcoming school year. Amazingly, 95 percent of our students come from two-parent families.

Faculty/Staff Characteristics

Certified Staff: Total Number: 11 + 1 (see other)

Education Please indicate number of staff members in each category

BA: 10 Ed.D./Ph.D.: 0

MA: 2 BS: 0

Other: 1 (Certification waiver—certificate pending, holds BA)

Years of Experience Teaching Please indicate number of staff in each category

Fewer than 6 years: 4

6–10 years: 5

11–15 years: 2

More than 15 years: 0

American Indian: 0

Pacific Islander: 0

Black: 0

Hispanic: 0

Asian: 0

Faculty Usage

The faculty and administration consist of seven regular classroom teachers, three one-third-time subject-area specialists (PE, Music, and Art), one special education teacher (EC/PC), one part-time speech and language therapist, and one principal/administrator. The classroom teachers are responsible for student instruction in a self-contained environment. The primary curriculum used in reading and math is the Open Court series, and social studies, science, and fine arts are driven by the Core Knowledge Foundation's Curriculum Series. The pupil/teacher ratio is maintained at 26 to 1, although the school does maintain educational assistants in every classroom for 5 to 7 hours per day. The principal is the instructional, administrative, operational, and organizational leader in the school. The Board of Directors and staff work in conjunction with the principal to establish educational policies and procedures as well as set goals, develop programs, and determine appropriate methods and material to accomplish the mission of Jefferson Academy.

The classified staff includes seven classroom aides \educational assistants), one school secretary, one playground supervisor, one clinic aide, and one custodian. The educational assistants support the classroom teachers with clerical duties, working with small groups, and recess supervision. The school secretary attends to all school office duties and needs, and maintains all school records per district standards. The clinic aide attends to minor medical emergencies and administers student medication and medical action plans. The custodian works in conjunction with the district-paid building engineer and maintains all classrooms and facilities for a safe and clean school environment.

Organizational Structure of the School

Jefferson Academy operates under a charter school contract that was negotiated between the Board of Directors of Jefferson Academy and the Jefferson County Public School District. The charter school law enables parents, teachers, or organizations to establish new, innovative, and experimental ways to educate children within the public system, resulting in more options for the students and families. Jefferson Academy has a Board of Directors consisting of seven members (six parents and the principal), and this Board is solely responsible for all aspects of the school. The Board of Directors is responsible for its own operations, which include all fiscal, personnel, administrative, operational, and educational aspects of the school.

Assisting the Board of Directors are the two standing committees: Teacher Review and Accountability. Additional committees have been convened as needed in the following areas: Business Development, Publicity, Fund Raising, and Technology. These committees report to the Board on an as-needed basis.

Educational Program

The mission of Jefferson Academy is to help students attain their highest social and academic potential through an academically rigorous, content-rich educational program.

The mission will be accomplished through the use of the Core Knowledge Foundation's scope and sequence and a fundamental, "back-to-basics" approach. Thus, Jefferson Academy emphasizes the teaching of basic skills with a traditional and conventional approach in a self-contained educational environment. Our academically-oriented program is organized so that the entire class generally works as a single group on grade-level material with ability grouping where necessary. Emphasis is placed on the basic foundations necessary for an academically sound education: reading (with emphasis on phonics), mathematics, English, geometry, geography, history, government, penmanship, spelling, fine arts, physical education, and science. Homework is assigned on a regular basis with the goal of strengthening and/or enriching daily work.

Strict discipline and order is maintained; students are expected to respect authority, accept responsibility, respect the rights of others, take care of their own property, and be careful with the property of others.

Assessment includes teacher observations; evaluation of regular assignments and student product; teacher-made tests; report cards; standardized, norm- and criterion-referenced tests; and student portfolios.

II. Criteria for Award

For criteria A through E, please complete information related to:

Where did we begin?

Provide data to support the current student academic performance for your school in each of the three State Board of Education goal areas and additional goal areas (as appropriate). Indicate community satisfaction levels. Disaggregate the data for racial/ethnic and gender subpopulations where possible.

Where are we going?

List goals/objectives you have set for the coming year related to the State Board of Education goals, your district priorities, and your community needs.

How do we get there?

Briefly describe methods and activities.

How do we know we are there?

Indicate the measures you will use to indicate progress toward your goals. A two-year history is required. Build into your measurement design disaggregation of data and use of performance-based measures where possible.

A. Graduation Rate

1. **Where did we begin?** The 1994–95 school year was Jefferson Academy's first full year of operation. Baseline data were derived from teacher observations, past documentation, parent input, and standardized test results to identify the abilities and needs of our students in relation to the goals, objectives, and expectations of the school and its curriculum. Teachers made adjustments as needed for individual students.

   - Gender differences have been identified among second-grade students at Jefferson Academy in reading and word analysis. Per standardized tests administered in the fall, females scored higher than males in the respective areas (normal curve equivalent means):

	Reading (2nd Grade)	Word Analysis (2nd Grade)
Males	30.15	29.69
Females	42.61	39.00

   - At-risk students are identified as students performing at least one year above or below grade level (Federal Chapter 2 definition). Through teacher observation and formal evaluation of student performance, it has been determined that:

     — 34.5 percent of Jefferson Academy's K–6 student population is at risk

     — 6 percent of the students are performing at least one year below grade level in the five major areas of achievement (vocabulary, reading, language, work/study, and math)

     — 28.5 percent of the students are performing at least one year above grade level in the five major areas of achievement (vocabulary, reading, language, work/study, and math).

2. **Where are we going?** Through analysis of the above data, Jefferson Academy has adopted the following graduation rate goals:

- Jefferson Academy will be able to document by July 1, 1996, that specific changes and adjustments will have been made to instructional methods to reduce gender differences in performance among students from the 1994–95 second-grade class. As a result, identified students will demonstrate a 20 percent increase in performance in those areas where discrepancies by gender exist.

- Jefferson Academy staff will be able to document by July 1, 1996, that at least 50 percent of the students continuously enrolled and performing at least one year below grade level will be performing at grade level. Additionally, 75 percent of the students performing at least one year above grade level will show more than the expected nine months of academic growth.

3. **How do we get there?** The mission of Jefferson Academy is to help students attain their highest social and academic potential through an academically rigorous, content-rich educational program. As a result of this mission, Jefferson Academy has adopted challenging content standards in all instructional areas. Our traditional delivery system and enriching core knowledge program will be used to meet student needs and thus accomplish the above stated goals.

4. **How do we know we are there?** We will know we have accomplished our goals when Jefferson Academy can document by July 1, 1996, that:

   - Identified students will demonstrate a 20 percent increase in performance in those areas where discrepancies by gender exist.

   - Fifty percent of the students performing one year below grade level and continuously enrolled will be performing at grade level by July 1, 1996. Additionally, 75 percent of the students performing at least one year above grade level will show more than the expected nine months of academic growth.

B. Attendance Rate

1. **Where did we begin?** Parents have made a significant decision to have their children attend Jefferson Academy. In the spring of 1995, Jefferson Academy families listed the following reasons for enrolling in the school in our 1994–1995 school survey (180 responded to this section).

   - 145 responses: I wanted higher standards and expectations held for all students

   - 140 responses: I wanted a traditional, "back to basics" system

   - 135 responses: I wanted a more disciplined classroom and school environment

- 108 responses: The current school system was not meeting my child's needs
- 103 responses: The current school system was not responsive to my concerns as a parent
- 75 responses: I wanted a smaller school community
- 20 responses: Other

Additionally, the following data were collected:

- 97 percent of the parents agree that the school meets their student's needs
- 97 percent of the parents agree that they are well informed about what is being taught
- 97 percent of the students like coming to Jefferson Academy
- 243 parents have volunteered 6,000 hours in the 1994–95 school year (or 24.69 hours per volunteer)

The current attendance rate is 96.4 percent.

2. **Where are we going?** It is the goal of Jefferson Academy to maintain an attendance rate of 95 percent or better. This will be accomplished by the following:
   - Maintain or increase the percentage of students who like coming to Jefferson Academy
   - Maintain or increase the percentage of parents who agree that they are well-informed about what is being taught
   - Maintain or increase the average number of volunteer hours served in the school
3. **How do we get there?**
   - When absences occur, teachers will make contact with the student and parents within one school day. This will ensure that make-up work is clearly assigned so that the impact on overall school work will be minimized and the student will not be overwhelmed by make-up work upon returning to school.
   - Students will be recognized each semester for perfect attendance through classroom awards given out by the principal.
   - Students will be recognized for good work and behavior.

- Student work will be displayed in the classroom and main hall.
- Students with absences in excess of 5 percent will be contacted by the teacher and/or principal to determine causes for absences. Strategies will be developed to help the student improve absenteeism.
- Parent involvement will continue to be encouraged, and more opportunities will be developed for parent involvement.
- Continue newsletter efforts to communicate the philosophy, expectations, and curriculum of the school.

4. **How do we know we are there?** When the school is able to document by July 1, 1996, that:

   - 97 percent or more of the parents agree that the school meets their student's needs
   - 97 percent or more of the parents agree that they are well-informed about what is being taught
   - 97 percent or more of the students like coming to Jefferson Academy

   Parents will have volunteered, on the average, 24.69 or more hours per individual parent in the 1995–96 school year.

C. Student Achievement Rate

1. **Where did we begin?** Per our parent survey, 67 percent of our families felt their children's academic needs were not being met in their previous school; 11 percent had no opinion. Jefferson Academy administered the Iowa Test of Basic Skills the first week of September 1994. The results of the Normal Curve Equivalent percentile means were as follows:

	Vocabulary	Reading	Spelling	Word Anal.	Math
First Grade	41.03	NA	54.61	42.80	66.53
Second Grade	40.15	36.38	52.30	34.34	43.19
	Vocabulary	**Reading**	**Language**	**Work/Study**	**Math**
Third Grade	44.44	50.69	46.44	44.22	41.88
Fourth Grade	51.18	42.22	45.50	44.59	48.59
Fifth Grade	54.50	46.67	52.03	50.42	52.34
Sixth Grade	64.00	62.66	53.86	54.20	56.13

These results, in addition to teacher observations, would suggest that achievement and skills were generally below average.

2. **Where are we going?** By July 1, 1996, Jefferson Academy will document that:

   - Using the ITBS evaluation, the vocabulary, reading, language (spelling in grades 1 and 2), work/study, and math for those students continuously enrolled for the reporting period, will have improved a minimum of 5 national percentile points based on the NCE mean analysis.
   - Portfolios will have been developed to show student growth over time. The portfolios will include results of standardized tests, criterion-referenced tests, teacher-made tests, report cards, student work samples, and any additional samples of work that help to analyze performance and achievement.
   - The percent of continually enrolled at-risk students will have been reduced by at least 5 percent, thus reducing the at-risk population to 29.5 percent.
   - The ITBS Survey edition will be administered annually to each student in grades 1–6, and 75 percent of the continuously enrolled students for the reporting period will score at or above predicted ability/grade levels in both reading and math as measured by the ITBS.

3. **How do we get there?** Jefferson Academy will achieve the stated goals by doing the following:

   - Teachers will develop strategies especially aimed at improving the reading, language, and math skills of those students in the first and second quartiles of the respective sub-tests
   - Teachers in grades 1–6 will set up incentive systems to encourage additional reading at home, beyond normal homework levels
   - Jefferson Academy will continue to set high expectations and help parents to establish the same expectations at home
   - Staff will focus on additional inservice activities and staff development activities that will increase their abilities to challenge and meet the needs of all students in the reading, language, and math areas
   - Jefferson Academy will further develop the school library so that it provides resources for students and their families in the reading and language areas

4. **How do we know we are there?** Jefferson Academy staff will be able to document by July 1, 1996, that the goals identified in section 2 above (Where are we going?) have been attained as stated.

D. Additional Goals

1. **Where did we begin?** Jefferson Academy is without appropriate computer technology and is in final planning stages to purchase systems that will serve our school community and its unique needs. Upon funding from the school district and additional fundraising by our PTO and Business Development Committee, Jefferson Academy will install an adequate technology plan by the end of the first academic quarter of 1995.

2. **Where are we going?** Within six months of final installation of a major portion of the computer technology plan for Jefferson Academy, 75 percent or more of the students in grades 3–6 will be able to create and produce a product using visual, audio, or printed means that relates to or supports their curriculum.

3. **How do we get there?** Teachers will receive training and be scheduled into the computer lab following a plan to be determined by the staff. Additional paid and volunteer staff with specialization in the use of technology and computers in an educational setting will be sought to assist classroom teachers with this process.

4. **How do we know we are there?**

   Third Grade: Students will write and print a short story, and will illustrate the story on the computer. Students will illustrate scientific concepts with a printed product. Students will enter data into a spreadsheet, and prompt the computer to plot a chart. Students will be proficient at researching through the use of CD-ROM resources.

   Fourth Grade: Students will monitor individualized growth in the use of the keyboard by analyzing individualized graphs and charts. Students will enter data into a spreadsheet table, analyze the pattern, and complete the table. Students will type and print a short story with the illustration(s). Students will be very proficient at researching through the use of CD-ROM resources.

   Fifth Grade: Students will type and print assignments for language arts, science, and social studies. Students will use a spell-checker program. Students will use desktop publishing techniques to generate a newspaper-style printout. Students will use a spreadsheet, record data, and prompt the computer to plot a graph. Students will generate illustrations for a nonfiction piece of writing. Students will be very proficient at researching through the use of CD-ROM resources.

   Sixth Grade: Students will set up a database, enter data, sort, and select. Students will set up a spreadsheet, enter data, and prompt the computer to plot a graph. Students will generate illustrations of scientific concepts. Students will use technology to generate printed products in a classroom newspaper project. Students will be very proficient at researching through the use of CD-ROM resources.

E. **Community Satisfaction with School Performance**

1. **Where did we begin?** Jefferson Academy is a school of choice. As stated in the Attendance section of this document, parents had very definite thoughts in regard to becoming involved with Jefferson Academy. The primary reasons, in rank order, were as follows:

   1. I wanted higher standards and expectations held for all students
   2. I wanted a traditional, "back-to-basics" system
   3. I wanted a more disciplined classroom and school environment
   4. The current school system was not meeting my child's needs
   5. The current school system was not responsive to my concerns as a parent
   6. I wanted a smaller school community

2. **Where are we going?** Jefferson Academy will be able to document by July 1, 1996, that at least 90 percent of Jefferson Academy's K–6 grade families re-enroll their children in the school for the following year, excluding the children of those families who move out of the Jefferson County Public School District.

3. **How do we get there?** Jefferson Academy will continue to serve our constituency and respond to their suggestions and needs. Parent surveys will be administered yearly to assess general and specific satisfaction in the following areas: curriculum, instruction, and assessment; school climate; administrative staff effectiveness; and communication. Jefferson Academy will also educate parents on the philosophy, curriculum, and methods prescribed in our charter agreement through parent "coffees" with the principal. These discussions and chats will allow parents a place to process their concerns as well as their joys.

4. **How do we know we are there?** Jefferson Academy will be able to document by July 1, 1996, that at least 90 percent of Jefferson Academy's families re-enroll their children in the school for the following year, excluding the children of those families who move out of the Jefferson County Public School District.

F. **Effective School Practices.** Provide a brief narrative description of your school's practices in at least four of the areas listed below.

- Vision
- Beliefs about learning
- Diversity of education options
- Focus on student performance outcomes
- Parent and community involvement
- Safe school and student discipline
- Use of technology
- Early intervention in high-risk situations
- Other correlates of restructured and effective schooling

1. **Vision.** The mission of Jefferson Academy is to help students attain their highest social and academic potential through an academically rigorous, content-rich educational program. The board and staff strategically plan with that vision in mind at all times. The school also has stated goals in the parent handbook that stress development of students in academic, physical, artistic, social, and emotional areas.

2. **Beliefs about learning.** Jefferson Academy will encourage and provide growth in basic skills using a fundamental approach and utilizing the core knowledge scope and sequence so that we can enable the students to be self-realized and productive citizens. We believe that students can learn at much higher levels given a more challenging educational environment.

   The staff of Jefferson Academy continually evaluates the curriculum and related methods and materials based on the following criteria:

   - It is desirable that the curriculum be written from a Core Knowledge and Fundamental perspective
   - The curriculum should be traditional and conventional in nature, utilizing proven advances in methods in the field of education
   - The curriculum delivery system must be teacher-centered, allowing the teacher to exercise personal giftedness and judgment in applying the curriculum, methods, and materials

3. **Focus on student performance outcomes.** The curriculum of Jefferson Academy is structured to focus on specific content giving specific results. Integration of a wide range of disciplines and a focus on a specific range of core knowledge has led us to specific content standards in each subject area. These content standards will allow our students to experience success as students and citizens.

4. **Parent involvement and participation** is critically important at Jefferson Academy. Two hundred forty-three (243) parents have volunteered 6,000 hours in the 1994–95 school year (or 24.69 hours per volunteer). The school is committed in policy and practice to including parents and families in the educational process whenever possible.

5. **Safe school and student discipline.** Jefferson Academy has a strict discipline policy and procedure. One of the most important lessons for any student to learn is how to respect authority, respect the rights of others, and take care of his or her own and other's property. Additionally, no student will be allowed to disrupt the education of other students. Although it is necessary to have school and classroom rules, our emphasis is not on "do's and don'ts," but guiding the student to a

proper response to any given situation. In order to accomplish this, we have set discipline standards that are enforced fairly and consistently.

Since the classroom teacher is the one who works most closely with the children, he or she carries the bulk of the discipline responsibility. It is important that the teacher works closely with the parents in these matters and that communications are open and honest. It is of utmost importance that the teacher and parents work together as a team in discipline matters. Jefferson Academy has four school rules that promote a safe environment:

- Keep all communications [respectful] to one another
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Respect and obey all supervising adults
- Be a good caretaker of all things

6. **Use of technology.** Jefferson Academy is committed to a technology plan that will prepare our students for the 21st century.

7. **Early intervention in high-risk situations.** Jefferson Academy has employed exceptional staff who are particularly sensitive to the needs of any high-risk student. Teachers work closely with the student, parents, special education teacher, and principal to help design a program that meets the needs of the students who might be at risk. Portfolios and other informal and formal assessments are used to assess progress and to help keep the family well informed. Jefferson Academy seeks to intervene early in the educational experience of the student, usually kindergarten through third grade. This gives the student a better chance of being helped before problems adversely affect the student's educational success.

   The academy is also served by the Central Assessment Team. This team consists of an educational consultant, nurse, speech therapist, psychologist, language diagnostician, and social worker. Staffing and evaluations are only by referral and with signed consent of the parents of the student.

III. What Have We Accomplished?

Describe the means by which your school reports progress toward its goals to the State Board of Education and to the public.

1. Staff produces weekly letters, which are sent home, thus keeping families informed.
2. The principal meets weekly with parents at a parent coffee for discussion and input.
3. Open Board of Directors meetings occur every month except July.
4. The principal attends monthly principal meetings at the district level and monthly area principal articulation meetings.
5. Two accountability committee members attend monthly district accountability meetings.
6. The school has an improvement plan in place and will be updating it annually.
7. The school will publish an annual year-end report to the public with all required components.
8. A report to parents on overall test results is published annually, with K–6 group results and individual results.
9. Jefferson Academy submits a semi-annual report to the Jefferson County Public School District Board of Education in November and March of each school year.
10. Jefferson Academy responds to many requests to visit the school and conducts interviews about the philosophy, curriculum, and structure of the school. Many of those interviews have been published or are used in open discussion throughout the United States.

Submitted by:

Principal Date

Governing Board President Date

Superintendent Date

Local Board President Date

Approved by:

State Board of Education Chairperson Date

Additional Activities

(For use with Accountability section, pp. 1–49)

Financial Plan Give participants an incomplete financial plan and have them identify missing pieces.

Goals Have participants clearly state their goals and align accountability procedures/ assessment with their goals.

Annual Report Have participants think about the important components in an annual report. Then have them think backward and figure out what accountability measures to include in order to provide relevant information in the annual report.

Mock Site Visit Role play a charter school mock site visit (Use Workbook 3, Tool IV: Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools).

Tool IV: Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools

Charter schools are the most accountable public schools in the Commonwealth because they must demonstrate good results within five years or lose their charter. Annual site visits of charter schools are one of the means the Department of Education will use to document each school's accomplishments. As with all other elements of the accountability process, site visits will be guided by three central questions:

1. Is the academic program a success? An affirmative answer would be based on evidence that the school has made reasonable progress in meeting internally established goals over four years, and that student performance significantly improved and/or is persistently strong on internal and external academic assessments.

2. Is the school a viable organization? "Yes" would mean that the school is financially solvent and stable, enrollment is stable and near capacity, school governance is sound, and professional staff are competent and resourceful.

3. Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter? If the school's program and operation are consistent with the terms of its charter, and if the school is within the bounds of essential statutory and regulatory requirements, then the answer will be yes.

Because we want to answer these standard questions without trampling on the unique character and mission of each school, the Commonwealth is working with charter schools to develop an accountability contract for each school. This contract will describe clear, concrete, and measurable school performance objectives. These objectives will reflect an emphasis on student achievement, but may also pertain to student attendance, parental satisfaction and participation, safety and order, mobilization of private resources, school environment, staff development, facility improvement, or fiscal management.

This accountability contract will also describe the measures the school will use to document progress toward those objectives, including credible student assessment tools for annually tracking student performance. Charter schools report their objectives and progress toward them in the annual report due August 1 of each year.

The purpose of annual site visits is to augment and verify the information contained in the annual report. Site visits will also help educate the general public about the charter school initiative and provide a charter school with critical feedback from a jury of objective peers. These day-long site visits will be led by the Department's Charter School Office and will be conducted by a small

group of Massachusetts citizens who are not involved in the school, including one parent, teacher, school leader, business person, and public official. Visitors will tour the school and meet with the board of trustees, school director, teachers, students, and others.

Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools Format			
Time	Duration	Category	Notes
8:00–9:30	1 hour	Board of Trustees	A representative group is sufficient; all board members need not be present.
9:30–10:30	1 hour	School Director and Tour of Facility (meet with library, media, health, finance, personal)	Orientation and discussion, after which some team members may visit classrooms, with others talking with staff (e.g., library, health, and finance personnel).
10:30–11:30	1 hour	Students	Six students with samples of their best work about which they are prepared to talk. (Younger students may be accompanied by a teacher.) Some team members may continue classroom visits.
11:30–12:30	1 hour	Teachers and Staff* Parents* * These meetings may be held concurrently.	Three to six teachers from various grade levels and disciplines; three to six parents.
12:30–2:00	1.5 hours	Site Visit Team	Conversation about the team's opinions, observations, and conclusions.
2:00–3:00	1 hour	School Director	Wrap-up meeting to discuss the team's observations.
	Total = 6.5 hours		

The schedule will be coordinated by the school. The order is not critical and can be adapted to fit the needs of the school.

Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools: Essential Questions

Is the academic program a success?

- Is the school's curriculum based on high academic standards, in terms of both content and performance?
- Has student performance improved or been persistently strong on internal and external assessments?

Is the school a viable organization?

- Are the school's purposes and objectives clear and thoroughly understood by those connected with the school governing body, professional staff, students, and parents?
- Is the school safe?
- Are the physical facilities adequate for the program of the school?
- Does the school have appropriate controls and procedures for the management of financial resources?
- Are professional staff members qualified by training and/or experience in the areas to which they are assigned?
- Does the school have an effective governance structure and administrative organization for carrying out the purposes and objectives of the school?
- Are parents satisfied with the performance of the school?

Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?

- Do the school's curriculum, program, and activities seem consistent with essential legal and regulatory requirements?
- Is the school becoming the school it promised to become in its charter?

Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools: Interview Questions

Board of Trustees

- Describe the school's mission and purposes.
- Describe this school as you might at an informational session.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of the board.
- How do you know your school's academic program is successful?
- Describe a recent policy decision made by the board. How was the matter initiated, and by whom? What was the procedure used by the board? What was the decision? How was this action made known to those affected?
- How does the board evaluate the performance of the school leader? How are their conclusions transmitted to that person and by whom?

- What is the policy of the board regarding possible conflicts of interest between board members in their roles as members of that body and in their business or professional roles?
- What are the school's greatest accomplishments and challenges?
- What did you learn last year that you have been able to use to your advantage this year?
- Is there information not presented in the annual report that you think is of particular importance to the team?

School Director

- What is the mission of the school?
- Is the mission clear and understood by those connected with the school: trustees, staff parents, and students?
- Describe the school as you might at an informational session.
- Describe the decisionmaking process in the school.
- Describe your relationship with the board of trustees.
- What are your school's budget and financial control procedures?
- Describe the school's curriculum, with examples of content and performance standards for key grade levels.
- How did students perform in your first year? Please refer to specific test scores, attendance records, and so forth.
- How is the progress of each student evaluated?
- What are the school's greatest accomplishments and challenges?
- What did you learn last year that you have been able to use to your advantage this year?
- Is there information not presented in the annual report that you think is of particular importance to the team?

Teachers

- Describe the school's mission and purposes.
- Describe the school as you might at an informational session.
- What training and experience do you bring to your position?

- What do you value about teaching at this school?
- What is unique about this school's philosophy or approach?
- What are your goals for your students?
- How are this school's expectations communicated to teachers?
- How do you assess each student's needs, work, and progress?
- What kinds of curriculum planning and coordination occur at the school level?

Students

- How old are you, and what grade are you in?
- How would you describe this school to a friend?
- Where did you go to school before you came to this school?
- Are you a better student than you were at your previous school?
- Do you have more or less homework than at your previous school?
- How safe is your school?
- How are your teachers?
- Explain the assignment that you have brought with you.
- How long did it take you?
- What kind of help did you get?
- What changes did you make?
- What did you like about this assignment?
- What did you learn by doing this project/assignment? Explain.

Parents

- How many children do you have at the school?
- How old are they?
- Why did you choose to send your child(ren) to this school?
- What do you understand the school's mission to be?
- How would you describe the school to a neighbor?

- Where did your children attend school previously?
- How active are you in this school as compared to your child(ren)'s previous school?
- How would you evaluate the safety of this school?
- How would you assess your child's interest in learning?
- What are this school's greatest strength and greatest weakness?
- What do you consider the most important knowledge and skills your child(ren) should acquire?
- How is the school meeting this challenge?
- Are your family's expectations of the school being met?

Note: This protocol was developed in consultation with the Hudson Institute; National Association of Independent Schools; New England Association of Schools and Colleges Inc.; Performance Assessment Collaborative for Education; and Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research.

B. Brainstorming Session

(For use with Program Evaluation and Student Assessment section, pp. 50–66)

Training Objectives

To clearly define what participants want to know about their students and their achievement.

To clearly define the appropriate assessment methods.

This activity is best suited for pre-operational charter school leaders in large groups.

Materials Needed

1. Participants ready to brainstorm
2. Large sheets of paper
3. Pens/markers
4. Pads of writing paper

Instructions

1. Group participants according to school.
2. Have groups brainstorm what they think is important to know about their students (in terms of achievement, behavior, satisfaction, etc.). Have them write all ideas on large sheets of paper.
3. Have groups brainstorm how to assess the areas which they decide are important (e.g., standardized tests, portfolios).

The focus of a school's assessment plan should agree with the overall philosophy of the school. What is important to them for their students should be what they focus on assessing.

Charter Application Review

(For use with Program Evaluation and Student Assessment section, pp. 50–66)

Training Objectives

To learn to align evaluation/assessment with a school's charter.

To be able to develop an evaluation/assessment plan based on one's charter.

This activity is best suited for pre-operational charter school leaders in small or large groups.

Materials Needed

1. Examples of charter applications
2. Large sheets of paper
3. Markers

Instructions

1. Divide participants into small groups.
2. Have each group read a sample charter application.
3. Have each group critique the evaluation and assessment plan of the school, listing strengths and weaknesses on large sheets of paper.
4. Have each group develop alternative methods for evaluation and assessment for the school in areas where they find weaknesses.

Stakeholders Meeting

(For use with Program Evaluation and Student Assessment section, pp. 50–66)

Training Objectives

To understand the importance of reporting information regarding school to a variety of stakeholders.

To develop various methods to report to stakeholders.

This activity is best suited for all charter school leaders in large groups.

Materials Needed

1. Tables/chairs set up in meeting format in room
2. Index cards with descriptions of various stakeholders for participants to role play

Instructions

1. Group participants into three groups: school members, stakeholders, general audience (if too many participants for other two groups).
2. Give each stakeholder a card with a description of the role he or she will be playing.
3. Give school members descriptions of stakeholders as well.
4. Give participants time to prepare for roles/presentation.
5. Have school members present to stakeholders and general audience on their fictitious school, addressing specific interests of those present. How will they assess various points, and how will they show they have been successful?
6. Have all participants reflect upon the presentation and discuss what they agreed with, what they didn't, and other ideas they might have.

Examples of Stakeholders

- A parent who wants her child to master the basics
- A parent who wants his child to develop critical-thinking skills
- A parent who wants her child to be more motivated in school
- A school board member who is very critical of charter schools' ability to promote student achievement
- A school district representative who is evaluating charter schools in the district
- A teacher from another local school who is interested in the idea of charter schools and wants to know more about them
- A teacher from another local school who has actively been fighting against charter schools in the district

Additional Activities

(For use with Program Evaluation and Student Assessment section, pp. 50–66)

Assessment Action Planning Sheet

Have participants individually complete the Assessment Action Planning Sheet (page 95).

Expert Panel

- Bring in experts to discuss assessment.
- Possible ideas include an expert on standardized tests to discuss pros and cons of standardized testing and how schools can use them for their own purposes. Also, expert teachers who are utilizing various forms of assessment in their classrooms would be beneficial.

Assessment Potpourri

- Bring a wide variety of example assessment measures.
- Help participants think of assessment not strictly as standardized tests.
- Assign participants in groups to one assessment measure.
- Have groups brainstorm what their assessment measure is assessing specifically and report back to the larger group.
- Have groups decide if they would want to use the assessment (or some version of it) and the reasons why or why not. It is important for participants to be able to justify their assessment choices. Their choices must be purposeful.

Tool I: Assessment Action Planning Sheet

This activity is developed to assist you in thinking through the issues and considerations involved in developing and selecting assessment tools. It is helpful to return often to these questions when reviewing the quality of the curriculum and assessment activities presented to students.

Assessment Action Planning Sheet—Creating an Assessment Vision for My Classroom

What do I want to accomplish with an assessment? For example: monitoring student progress, diagnosing student needs, reporting achievement to others, student self-assessment, and so forth.

What student learning objectives do I want to assess? For example: reading.

The assessment method or process I plan to explore in my classroom and why it serves the purpose and matches the learning objectives.

How will the curriculum and instruction be aligned with standards?

What kind of feedback will be given to students to help them improve?

Will this assessment be given some sort of grade? How will the grade be determined? How will you gather information?

How will you communicate student expectations?

How will you promote student ownership (buy-in)?

Will you utilize a self-, peer-, or teacher-assessment process?

What other components of your assessment method or process do you need to address?

Is this assessment method or process worth the time and effort?

Workbook 4: Governance and Management

A. Governance and Management Training Suggestions

Governance and Management Issues

- Work with participants to help them identify roles and responsibilities of a board.
- Make reference to other content areas in the workbook. How would a board deal with these issues?

Business Plan and Financial Management Issues

- Connect this section to the Accessing Experts section (see Workbook 1: Start-Up Logistics).
- Discuss which items are flexible and which aren't.
- Explain to participant that a budget may work for one year, but you need to think in three to five years (e.g., you don't need a custodian in year 1, but eventually you'll want one). Some things are a one-time cost, others are ongoing.
- There are new charter financial information resources available from Bryan Hassel. The publication can be found online at www.charterfriends.org/outofbox.html.
- Drive home the point that if you can't handle the business side of running a school, the founders must find someone who can and who can do it well.
- Find out what state/district forms are required and provide copies to participants.

Leadership Issues

- Help participants understand that there is a need to work on the transition from visionary to manager.

Personnel Issues

- Comprehensive employment charter manual with two areas
- Become familiar with federal and state laws and, if applicable, district requirements regarding personnel issues
- Explore personnel policies of local districts

Policy Development Issues

- Policies need to be integrated, not imposed, into the classroom. Encourage participants to solicit input from key stakeholders.

Selecting a Board

(For use with Governance and Management Issues section, pp. 1–15)

Training Objective

To familiarize participants with board selection and recruitment issues.

This activity is best suited for small groups.

Materials Needed

1. Copies of the Selecting a Board activity sheets, one set per participant
2. Paper for participants to take notes regarding their decisions

Instructions

1. Familiarize everyone with the basic roles and responsibilities of a governing board. (Use pages 1 and 2 of the workbook.)
2. Have participants get into small groups. Each group will be acting as a founding group of a school. Have the group quickly decide on what basic type of school they are creating for purposes of this discussion, and what size board they will have (seven to 12 members).
3. Pass out one set of activity sheets for each participant. Refer to and discuss the activity sheet that describes the seven characteristics of board members. Next, explain that there are 20 potential board members (refer to remaining activity sheets). They must decide first as individuals, and then as a group, who among these choices will comprise their board.
4. When individuals are reading through and deciding on which board members are best suited for their group's school, ask them to also record the three important characteristics of their choices. Questions to consider:
   - — Does your selected board have a good representation of all the seven characteristics?
   - — Does your selected board have a broad range of skills?
   - — Is there anyone else you'd like to see on the board who is not represented on the choice list?
5. As individuals finish making choices, have them discuss their reasoning in their respective groups.

A Board Member Should Have Any Three of These Seven Characteristics

- **Industry**—willingness to commit the time and energy to the work that needs to be done
- **Intellect**—intelligent people who understand education, including the "big picture" of education
- **Expertise**—individuals with experience in real estate, law, or other skilled practitioners
- **Affluence**—individuals or corporations can contribute funds as well as in-kind donations (NOTE: This characteristic alone is no reason to include someone on your board)
- **Influence**—political, social, economic
- **Leadership**—proven skills in more than one setting
- **Time**—available time and willingness to commit that time to the board

Name: Rustin Miller

Occupation: Lawyer

Relationship: Parent

Area of expertise: Defense attorney

1

Name: Barbara Lawton

Occupation: Lawyer

Relationship: Parent

Areas of expertise: Labor law, contracts

2

Name: Tony Mesa

Occupation: Realtor

Relationship: Parent

Area of expertise: Specializes in commercial real estate

3

Name: Charles Peach

Occupation: Carpenter

Relationship: Parent

Area of expertise: Interior remodeling

4

Name: Donna VanOrden

Occupation: Business owner

Relationship: Parent and one of the founders of your school

Areas of expertise: Small business finance and loans

5

Name: Becky Wiltz

Occupation: Graduate student

Relationship: Parent

Area of expertise: Organizational psychology

6

Name: Arlene Davidson Occupation: Executive secretary Relationship: Parent Area of expertise: Organizational effectiveness 7	Name: Kevin Bates Occupation: Human resources, benefits administration Relationship: Parent Area of expertise: HR laws in your state 8
Name: Rhonda Storer Occupation: Interior decorator Relationship: Parent Area of expertise: None related. Interested in implementing and securing the mission of the school 9	Name: Eric Chen Occupation: Sales Relationship: Parent Areas of expertise: Negotiation, communications 10
Name: John Gress Occupation: Retired Relationship: Neighbor Areas of expertise: Retired middle school principal, has worked for the state department of education 11	Name: Linda Garcia Occupation: Teacher at your school Relationship: Teacher Areas of expertise: Eight years experience, actively involved in the State Charter Association 12

Name: Ryan Schatz

Occupation: Teacher at your school

Relationship: Teacher

Areas of expertise: Three years experience, two of which were in another charter school

13

Name: Catherine Wu

Occupation: Full-time parent

Relationship: Parent

Area of expertise: Former president of a Parent-Teacher Organization at a regular public school

14

Name: Hannah Coleman

Occupation: Director of nonprofit environmental organization

Relationship: Parent

Areas of expertise: Environmental law, lobbying, is currently on another board as well

15

Name: Neil Kohler

Occupation: Bookkeeper

Relationship: Parent

Areas of expertise: Organization, records

16

Name: Benjamin Ramsey Occupation: Business owner/CEO Relationship: Personal friend of the school's chief administrator Areas of expertise: Marketing, has been very successful building his business 17	Name: Ruth Collard Occupation: Public relations writer Relationship: Parent Area of expertise: Public relations 18
Name: Akram Hussein Occupation: Financial analyst Relationship: Parent Areas of expertise: Budgets, cost-benefit analysis, MBA 19	Name: Sean Adams Occupation: Full-time parent Relationship: Parent, friend of Ryan Shatz (another potential board member) Areas of expertise: Former teacher, interested in assisting with curriculum development 20

Governance Panel Discussion

(For use with Governance and Management Issues section, pp. 1–15)

Training Objective

To hear firsthand from board members about their experiences on a school board.

This activity is best suited for a large group.

Materials needed

1. Four or five panelists who are or have been on a school board, preferably on a charter school board. Backgrounds of these individuals should differ enough to provide variety in the panel. Boards on which they serve or have served should vary in size, and panelists' respective roles should vary as well.
2. Bylaws Checklist as a handout.

Instructions

Ask panelists to introduce themselves and briefly describe their board experience. Questions for panelists include:

1. Describe your governance model. Is it a traditional model? An entrepreneur model? A school committee model? What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of each type? (See page 4 in the Workbook for more information.)
2. Describe what types of things should be in the bylaws.
3. What types of subcommittees are there on your board? Do these assist in spreading the responsibilities of members?
4. Does anyone do any board orientation or board member development?
5. What do you think about founding members being on the board?
6. What are some of your recruitment strategies for attracting new board members?
7. How do you ensure that the vision and mission of the school are preserved and realized?
8. What are some of the difficulties that your board has encountered?
9. How are agendas developed?

Allow time for questions from the audience. Provide participants with the handout.

Tool II: Bylaws Checklist (Examples of Bylaws)

	In Development	Developed	N/A
1. OFFICES			
2. PURPOSE			
3. MEMBERS			
3.1 Members			
3.2 Associates			
4. DIRECTORS			
4.1 General Powers			
4.2 Specific Powers			
4.3 Number, Election, and Term of Directors			
4.4 Resignation and Removal			
4.5 Vacancies			
4.6 Place of Meetings			
4.7 Annual Meetings			
4.8 Regular Meetings			
4.9 Special Meetings			
4.10 Retirements Applicable to Meetings			
4.11 Quorum and Voting			
4.12 Waiver of Notice			
4.13 Adjournment			
4.14 Rights of Inspection			
4.15 Fees and Compensation			
4.16 Restriction of Interested Directors			
4.17 Standard of Care			
5. OFFICERS			
5.1 Officers			
5.2 Election			
5.3 Subordinate Officers			
5.4 Removal			
5.5 Resignation			
5.6 Vacancies			
5.7 President/Chief Education Officer			
5.8 Vice Presidents			
5.9 Secretary			
5.10 Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer)			

	In Development	Developed	N/A
6. COMMITTEES			
6.1 Board Committees			
6.2 Meetings and Actions of Board Committees			
6.3 Executive Board			
6.4 Other Committees			
7. SELF-DEALING TRANSACTIONS			
7.1 Definition			
7.2 Action of the Board			
7.3 Interested Director's Vote			
7.4 Committee Approval			
7.5 Persons Liable and Extent of Liability			
7.6 Statute of Limitations			
7.7 Corporate Loans and Advances			
7.8 Annual Statement of Certain Transactions			
8. OTHER PROVISIONS			
8.1 Validity of Instrument			
8.2 Construction and Definitions			
8.3 Authority To Vote Securities			
8.4 Fiscal Year			
8.5 Conflict of Interest			
8.6 Interpretation of Charter			
9. INDEMNIFICATION OF AGENTS OF THE CORPORATION: PURCHASE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE			
9.1 Definitions			
9.2 Indemnification of Agents			
9.3 Purchase of Liability Insurance			
9.4 Nonapplicability to Fiduciaries of Employee			
10. AMENDMENTS			
10.1 Bylaws			

B. Creating a Budget

(For use with Business Plan and Financial Management section, pp. 16–41)

Training Objective

To familiarize participants with the components of a charter school budget, including the importance of reserves.

This activity is intended for pre-operational charter school leaders and small groups.

Materials needed

1. Charter School Start-Up Budget Worksheet
2. "ABC" Charter School Start-Up Budget, sample budget

Instructions

This activity is designed to assist you in clearly thinking through some of the expenses the school will incur in obtaining and preparing facilities, designing programs, hiring staff, and generally preparing for school operations. For purposes of this budgeting exercise, assume no tuition revenue is received from the state during the start-up phase. Careful development and analysis of start-up budgets minimizes start-up costs and avoids deficit spending.

1. Distribute worksheet and sample budget.
2. Ask participants to make a list of pre-operating expenses and revenues. Assign dollar amounts to each item on the list. If they are unsure about the cost of certain items, suggest that they call vendors from whom they may buy these goods and services and ask for a quote. Suggestions: add an additional 10 percent to each quote as a contingency. This itemized list represents the start-up costs needed to open school doors.

3. Areas for discussion (see workbook, pp. 16–41, on business plan and financial management for more detailed information).

   — Importance of financial reserves for unexpected expenses: new roof, replacing equipment, or drops in enrollment

   — Determining comparable teacher salaries

   — Do you need a custodian in year 1? What about in year 3 or 5?

   — Outsourcing if necessary—what if you can't do it yourself?

   — Long-range budgets

   — Establishing financial systems

   — Year-end audits

Tool II: Charter School Start-Up Budget Worksheet

Charter School Start-Up Budget Worksheet—Expenses Before Year 1

	Average Monthly Amount	Months	Total
Operating Revenue Expenses			
Salaries and Benefits			
Teachers			
Administrators			
Support Staff			
Subtotal			
Services and Activities			
Custodial Services			
Telephone			
Subtotal			
Supplies and Equipment			
Furniture			
Computers			
Textbooks			
Subtotal			
Marketing and Development			
Printing			
Advertising			
Subtotal			
Physical Plant			
Renovations			
Rents			
Utilities			
Subtotal			
Total Expenses			
EXCESS (DEFICIT)			
Grants and Loans			
Government Start-Up Grant			
Private Grants			
Loans			
Total Grants and Loans			
ENDING FUND BALANCE			

Tool IV-A: "ABC" Charter School Start-Up Budget: Expenses Before Year 1

	Avg. Monthly Amount	Months	No.	Total
Operating Revenue				$0
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits				
Teachers	$2,500	2	6	$30,000
Administrators	$3,000	4	1	$12,000
Support Staff	$1,000	4	1	$4,000
Subtotal				$46,000
Services and Activities				
Custodial Services	$500	4	N/A	$2,000
Telephone	$1,000	4	N/A	$4,000
Subtotal				$6,000
Supplies and Equipment				
Furniture	N/A	N/A	N/A	$2,000
Computers	N/A	N/A	2	$5,000
Textbooks	N/A	N/A	100	$2,000
Subtotal				$9,000
Marketing and Development				
Printing	N/A	N/A	N/A	$5,000
Advertising	N/A	N/A	N/A	$5,000
Subtotal				$10,000
Physical Plant				
Renovations	N/A	N/A	N/A	$25,000
Rent	$6,250	4	N/A	$25,000
Utilities	$2,000	4	N/A	$8,000
Subtotal				$58,000
Total Expenses				**($129,000)**
Excess (Deficit)				$129,000)
Grants and Loans				
Government Start-Up Grant				$50,000
Private Grants				$25,000
Loans				$55,000
Total Grants and Loans				$130,000
ENDING FUND BALANCE				**$1,000**

Tool IV-B: "ABC" Charter School Operating Budget: Year 1

Operating Revenue	Total	Assumptions/Notes
Per Pupil Revenue	$975,000	$6,500 per student (150 students)
Fees	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Student Entitlements	$75,000	$500 per student (150 students)
Total Revenue	$1,065,000	

Expenses	Total	Assumptions/Notes
Salaries and Benefits		
Salary—Teachers	$300,000	$40,000 per teacher (7.5 teachers)
Salary—Administrators	$67,500	$45,000 per administrator (1.5 administrators)
Salary—Support Staff	$37,500	$25,000 per support staff (1.5 support staff)
Salary—SPED/Bilingual Staff	$60,000	$40,000 per SPED/billing (1.5 SPED/billing)
Benefits—Health	$60,000	$5,000 per staff member (12 staff members)
Benefits—FICA	$34,875	7.5% of total salaries
Benefits—Workers' Comp	$9,300	2.0% of total salaries
Benefits—Medicare	$6,743	1.45% of total salaries
Staff Development	$6,000	$500 per staff member (12 staff members
Subtotal	$581,918	50.15% of total
Services and Activities		
Special Education/Guidance	$75,000	$500 per student (150 students)
Health	$22,500	$150 per student (150 students)
Custodial	$15,000	Flat fee
Transportation	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Media	$7,500	$50 per student (150 students)
Food	$30,000	$200 per student (150 students)
Accounting	$6,000	Flat fee
Insurance	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Telephone	$6,000	$500 per month
Postage and Shipping	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Physical Education and Extracurricular Activities	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Subtotal	$222,000	19.13% of total
Supplies and Equipment		
Supplies-Instructional	$45,000	$300 per student (150 students)
Supplies-Administrative	$3,000	$2,000 per administrator (1.5 administrators)
Supplies-General	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Computers	$30,000	$2,000 per student (10 students)
Furniture	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Athletic Equipment	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Other Equipment	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Subtotal	$138,000	11.89% of total
Marketing and Development		
Printing	$2,500	Flat fee
Advertising	$5,000	Flat fee
Subtotal	$7,500	0.65% of total
Physical Utilities		
Rent	$175,000	$10 per square foot (17,500 square feet)
Utilities	$10,000	Flat fee
Maintenance and Repairs	$10,000	Flat fee
Renovations	$ -	
Subtotal	$195,000	16.80% of total

Loan Repayments		
Debt Service	$4,960	8% interest rate ($62,000 average debt)
Principal	$11,000	
Subtotal	$15,960	1.38% of total
Total Expenses	**$1,160,378**	
EXCESS (DEFICIT)	**($95,378)**	
Grants and Loans		
Government Grants	$25,000	
Private Grants	$50,000	
Loans	$25,000	
Total Grants and Loans	**$100,000**	
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE From Previous Year	$1,000	
ENDING FUND BALANCE =	$5,622	

"Beginning Fund Balance" + "Excess (Deficit)" + "Grants and Loans"

Key Variables

Number of students (FTE)	15
Number of teachers	7.5
Number of administrators	1.5
Number of support staff	1.5
Number of SPED/bilingual staff	1.5
Students per teacher	20
Students per administrator	100
Students per support staff	100
Students per SPED/bilingual staff	100
Salary: Teacher	$40,000
Salary: Administrator	$45,000
Salary: Support Staff	$25,000
Salary: SPED/bilingual staff	$40,000
Payment per student	$6,500
Fees per student	$100
Entitlements per student	$500
Total principal owed at beginning of fiscal year	$55,000

Notes

- No interscholastic sports
- No transportation to/from school

Charter School Average Budget*

Per pupil revenue	$6,500
Salaries and Benefits	57.0%
Services and Activities	20.0%
Supplies and Equipment	7.5%
Physical Plant	15.0%
Debt Service	.5%

*Expenses based on 1997 annual reports of 14 charter schools

Developing a Basic Business Plan

(For use with Business Plan and Financial Management section, pp. 16–41)

Training Objective

To familiarize participants with the components of a charter school business plan, and to provide an opportunity to begin development of such a plan.

This activity is best suited for school teams (i.e., each group will consist of a team from one school).

Materials Needed

1. Considerations for Developing a Business Plan worksheet
2. Business Plan worksheet
3. Financial Statements definitions

Instructions

1. Introduce the concept of the business plan as a management tool. Distribute the Considerations for Developing a Business Plan worksheet and discuss each question briefly. Stress that these questions are not part of the written business plan.
2. Distribute the Business Plan Worksheet. Briefly go through each component so that all teams are familiar with all four components.
3. Assign one component (e.g., market analysis) per team. If there are more than four teams, assign two teams to a component (although they will work separately). Give the teams about 20 minutes to begin developing their respective sections of their business plan.
4. Ask teams to share their components to the extent that they have been developed. Allow for input from and discussion within the whole class.
5. Distribute the Financial Statements definitions. Familiarize the participants with each type of statement. The intention here is to introduce these concepts as an essential part of the business plan. Encourage participants to seek further assistance (e.g., from a CPA) if necessary.

Optional

Do this activity in conjunction with Activity 2.1: Creating a Budget.

Considerations for Developing a Business Plan

Note that these questions are not part of the business plan per se; they are intended to get you thinking about relevant issues.

1. Have you worked in a school and/or educational setting similar to the one you want to start?
2. Have you had any business and/or education training in school?
3. Do you know how much money you will need to get the school started?
4. Have you decided on a marketing plan?
5. Have you talked with other school developers/operators about what they think of the school?
6. Can you determine the amount of money you should receive in terms of revenues per student?
7. Have you tried to find out how well schools similar to the one you want to open are doing in your community and in the rest of the country?
8. If you need to hire someone to help you, do you know where to look?
9. Do you know what benefits to provide?
10. Do you have a plan for training your employees?
11. Have you talked with the parents and schools (both public and private) in the area?
12. Have you determined the type of payment you intend to accept for student fees, etc.?
13. Have you talked with an insurance agent about what kind of insurance you need?
14. Do you know what equipment and supplies you will need and how much they will cost?
15. Can you save money by buying secondhand equipment? Have you compared the prices and credit terms of different suppliers?

These questions were developed by the Charter Friends National Network.

Business Plan Worksheets

NOTE: We encourage you to develop the following components in your Business Plan. Traditional lenders and others who are requested to support your school over time will be impressed with such a plan.

I. School Description

Name and address

_____

_____

School description (grade levels, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

Mission statement

_____

_____

_____

Instructional focus

_____

_____

_____

Governance/administrative structure

_____

_____

_____

Charter accountability (describe briefly how your school plans to remain viable at renewal)

Relationship with charter-granting agency

II. Market Analysis

Description of the area or market/district(s) that the school will serve

Target market/student population (what segment of district's population do you plan to serve?)

Competition—other school(s) seeking the same student population to include private, public, magnet, parochial, and other charter schools

III. Marketing Strategy

Overall strategy (awareness for students and parents)

Specific admission and recruiting plans and policies

IV. Management Plan

Form of business organization (e.g., for-profit or nonprofit corporation)

Board of Directors (owners, partners, or governing board)

Administrator(s): organization chart or diagram and responsibilities (if applicable)

Staffing plan/number of employees

Facility plan/planned capital improvements

Operating plan/schedule of work for next year

Financial Statements

(For use with Business Plan and Financial Management section, pp. 16–41)

When preparing projected financial statements for your charter school business plan, you must start with basic assumptions for income and expenses. These assumptions for income and expenses should be detailed in your charter school business plan with supporting documentation derived from the market study and the market strategy. The projected financial statements should indicate financial changes in your revenue cycle. For instance, if your school receives fees and funds from the state during a specific time (i.e., quarterly), revenue during that period will be greater. Your financial projections should indicate the fluctuation in income and expenses.

There are four types of financial statements that should be included in your business plan:

1. Annual Operating Budget

The annual operating budget will take your income minus expenses and equal either a surplus or a deficit. The budget would show revenues by source (state aid, federal aid, grants, fees, etc.) and expenditure by object (salaries, benefits, rent, materials, books, services, professional training, utilities, insurance, etc.) for the first year of operations (or current fiscal year for a pre-existing school).

2. Cash Flow Statement

The cash flow statement will show the cash generated and collected from school operations. This statement will utilize the same income and expense as the annual operating budget; however, it breaks the information down into monthly or quarterly columns showing whether the school will have enough money to pay its bills at the end of each month or quarter. Naturally, if the school's annual revenues arrive at the school later than its expenditures must be paid, the school will need "working capital" (e.g., a short-term loan) in order to pay its expenses on time.

3. Three- to Five-Year Projections of Income and Expenses

A three- or five-year projection of anticipated income and expenses will show the planned growth, development, and needs of the school over time. Included in this kit are forms that may be used in the financial forecasting of your school. A rule of thumb when forecasting: "Be as conservative and as realistic as possible."

4. For those schools that are independent of their charter sponsor, an **Audited Balance Sheet** of the most recent year, prepared by an external, certified public accountant (if the school has been open and audited after its first year). Schools that are in the planning stage, or the first year of operations, and do not yet have an annual audit report, should develop a set of financial management policies. These policies would specify who is responsible for preparing and monitoring the school's budget and how the "powers of the purse" are distributed within their school among board members, staff, and others.

Options for Outsourcing

(For use with Business Plan and Financial Management section, pp. 16–41)

Training Objective

To increase participant awareness of options for outsourcing.

This activity will work well with a variety of experience levels.

Materials Needed

Panel of at least five consultants or service providers who are currently working with other charter schools in the area, as well as a charter school operator who is currently outsourcing for services.

Instructions

Ask panelists to describe:

- The type of services their organization offers
- Examples of successes they have had with charter schools
- Issues to consider when contemplating outsourcing

Allow time for discussion and questions from the audience.

Pitfalls and Possibilities

(For use with Business Plan and Financial Management section, pp. 16–41)

Training Objective

To increase participants' awareness of pitfalls and possible solutions to poor management.

Materials Needed

Five copies of each of the "Scenarios" (to be included, using material from The Changing Face of Charter Schools)

Instructions

1. Introduce the activity as an opportunity for participants to read about and discuss scenarios of poorly managed or unfortunate pitfalls.
2. Ask participants to get into groups of five. Distribute one or two scenarios to each group. Ask participants to read and discuss their group's scenario. Groups should:
   - — Identify what went wrong.
   - — Determine what could have prevented it.
   - — Come up with a solution.
   - — Select a reporter to share the story with the rest of the class.
   - — Have each group's reporter share their scenario(s). Allow time for some discussion of each in the whole class.
3. Summarize key findings, similarities of the scenarios, and their possible prevention/solutions.

C. Determining Your Leadership Style

(For use with Leadership section, pp. 42–68)

Training Objective

To assist participants in determining their own leadership style, to help them assess their strengths and weaknesses, and to help them to understand where differences in styles are useful.

Materials Needed

1. Leadership Style Survey
2. Personal Assessment: Practices of Facilitative Leadership

Instructions

1. Begin by reading the following quote:

   To lead people, walk beside them ...
   As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence.
   The next best, the people honor and praise.
   The next, the people fear;
   And the next, the people hate ...
   When the best leader's work is done, the people say,
   "We did it ourselves!" —Lao-tsu

   Do participants agree? What does good leadership mean? Explain that some leadership skills can be learned, but first participants must understand their own styles and preferences, as well as their strengths and weaknesses.

2. Distribute the Leadership Style Survey. Explain to participants that they will be assessing their own leadership styles. Decide if you would like to review the three major styles before participants begin the survey. It may be best to wait until afterward, since participants may steer their answers if they are keenly aware of the styles.

3. Discuss what types of leadership styles might be useful for various members of the charter school community in various situations.

4. Distribute the Personal Assessment worksheet. Briefly go through the seven practices: (1) share an inspired vision; (2) focus on process, results, and relationships. Ask participants to begin working through each practice. Encourage discussion. After participants have had a chance to work through most of the assessment, ask participants to share their examples.

Tool I: Leadership Style Survey

This informal tool is designed to help you think about the different leadership styles and the style you use most often when working with employees or team members.

Directions

This questionnaire contains statements about leadership style beliefs. Next to each statement, circle the number that represents how strongly you feel about the statement by using the following scoring system:

- Almost always true 5
- Frequently true 4
- Occasionally true 3
- Seldom true 2
- Almost never true 1

Be honest about your choices as there are no right or wrong answers—it is only for your own self-assessment.

		Almost Always True	Frequently True	Occasionally True	Seldom True	Almost Never True
1.	I always retain the final decisionmaking authority within my team.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	I always try to include one or more team members in determining what to do and how to do it. However, I maintain the final decision-making authority.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	My team and I always vote whenever a major decision must be made.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	I do not consider suggestions made by my team members, as I do not have the time for them.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	I ask for ideas and input on upcoming plans and projects from team members.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	For a major decision to pass, it must have the approval of each individual or the majority.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	I tell my team what must be done and how to do it.	5	4	3	2	1

	Almost Always True	Frequently True	Occasionally True	Seldom True	Almost Never True
8. When things go wrong and I need to create a strategy to keep a project or process running on schedule, I call a meeting to get my team's advice.	5	4	3	2	1
9. To get information out, I send it by e-mail, memos, or voice mail; very rarely is a meeting called. My team members are then expected to act upon the information.	5	4	3	2	1
10. When someone makes a mistake, I tell him or her not to ever do that again and make a note of it.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I want to create an environment where the team takes ownership of the project. I allow them to participate in the decisionmaking process.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I allow my team to determine what needs to be done and how to do it.	5	4	3	2	1
13. New hires are not allowed to make any decisions unless I approve it first.	5	4	3	2	1
14. I ask team members for their vision of where they see their jobs going and then use their vision where appropriate.	5	4	3	2	1
15. My team members know more about their jobs than I do, so I allow them to carry out the decisions to do their job.	5	4	3	2	1
16. When something goes wrong, I tell my team that a procedure is not working correctly, and I establish a new one.	5	4	3	2	1
17. I allow my team to set priorities with my guidance.	5	4	3	2	1
18. I delegate tasks in order to implement a new procedure or process.	5	4	3	2	1
19. I closely monitor my team to ensure they are performing correctly.	5	4	3	2	1
20. When there are differences in role expectations, I work with them to resolve the differences.	5	4	3	2	1
21. Each individual is responsible for defining his or her job.	5	4	3	2	1
22. I like the power that my leadership position holds over subordinates.	5	4	3	2	1
23. I like to use my leadership power to help subordinates grow.	5	4	3	2	1
24. I like to share my power with my subordinates.	5	4	3	2	1
25. Team members must be directed or threatened with punishment in order to get them to achieve the organizational objectives.	5	4	3	2	1

	Almost Always True	Frequently True	Occasionally True	Seldom True	Almost Never True
26. The team will exercise self-direction if members are committed to the objectives.	5	4	3	2	1
27. The team members will have the right to determine their own organizational objectives.	5	4	3	2	1
28. Team members seek mainly security.	5	4	3	2	1
29. The team knows how to use creativity and ingenuity to solve organizational problems.	5	4	3	2	1
30. My team can lead itself just as well as I can.	5	4	3	2	1

Scoring

In the fill-in lines below, mark the score of each item on the questionnaire. For example, if you scored item one with a 3 (occasionally), then enter a 3 next to Item 1. When you have entered all the scores for each question, total each of the three columns.

Item	Score	Item	Score	Item	Score
1	_____	2	_____	3	_____
4	_____	5	_____	6	_____
7	_____	8	_____	9	_____
10	_____	11	_____	12	_____
13	_____	14	_____	15	_____
16	_____	17	_____	18	_____
19	_____	20	_____	21	_____
22	_____	23	_____	24	_____
25	_____	26	_____	27	_____
28	_____	29	_____	30	_____
TOTAL	_____	TOTAL	_____	TOTAL	_____
Authoritarian (Autocratic)		**Participative (Democratic)**		**Delegative (Free Rein)**	

This questionnaire is to help you assess the leadership style under which you normally operate. The lowest score possible for a stage is 10 (almost never) while the highest score possible for a stage is 50 (almost always).

The highest of the three scores indicates which style of leadership you normally use. If your highest score is 40 or more, it is a strong indicator of your normal style.

The lowest of the three scores is an indicator of the style you use least. If your lowest score is 20 or less, it is a strong indicator that you normally do not operate out of this mode.

If two of the scores are close to the same, you might be going through a transition phase, either personally or at work, except:

- If you score high in both the participative and the delegative, then you are probably a delegative leader.
- If there is only a small difference between the three scores, this indicates that you have no clear perception of the mode under which you operate, or you are a new leader and are trying to feel out the correct style for you.

Normally, some of the best leaders operate out of the participative mode and use the other two modes as needed. The exception would be a leader who has a new crew or temporary work force. That leader would probably be operating out of the authoritarian mode. On the other side, a leader who has a crew of professionals or a crew that knows more than she or he does would probably operate out of the delegative mode.

Leaders who want their employees to grow use a participative style of leadership. As they "grow" into their jobs, they are gradually given more authority (delegative) over their jobs.

Leadership Styles Explained

Authoritarian (autocratic)

This type is used when the leader tells her group what she wants done and how she wants it done, without getting the advice of her people. Some of the appropriate conditions to use it are when you have all the information to solve the problem, you are short on time, and your group is well motivated.

Some people think that this style includes yelling, using demeaning language, and leading by threats and abuse of power. Such "leadership" is not the authoritarian style; it is an abusive, unprofessional style of leadership.

However, if you have the time and you want to gain more commitment and motivation from your group members, then you should use the participative style.

Participative (democratic)

This type of style involves the leader including one or more group members in determining what to do and how to do it. However, the leader maintains the final decisionmaking authority. This is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of strength that your group will respect.

This is normally used when you have some of the information, and your group members have some of the information. This allows them to become a team (rather than just a group), and allows you to make a better decision.

Delegative (free rein)

In this style, the leader allows the team (or individual) to make the decision. However, the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. This is used when a team is able to analyze the situation and determine what needs to be done and how to do it. You cannot do everything! You must set priorities and delegate certain tasks.

If there is only a small difference between the three scores, this indicates that you have no clear perception of the mode under which you operate, or you are a new leader and are trying to feel out the correct style for you. If two of the scores are close to the same, you might be going through a transition phase, either personally or at work, except: If you score high in both the participative and the delegative, then you are probably a delegative leader.

Normally, some of the best leaders operate out of the participative mode and use the other two modes as needed. The exception would be a leader who has a new crew or temporary work force. That leader would probably be operating out of the authoritarian mode. On the other side, a leader who has a crew of professionals or a crew that knows more than she or he does would probably operate out of the delegative mode.

Leaders who want their employees to grow use a participative style of leadership. As the employees "grow" into their jobs, they are gradually given more authority (delegative) over their jobs.

Tool III: Personal Assessment: The Seven Practices of Facilitative Leadership

Share an Inspiring Vision

Facilitative leaders create and communicate an inspiring image of the future and enroll others in its pursuit.

Skills:

- Deliver effective presentations
- Create vision

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Focus on Process, Results, and Relationships

Facilitative leaders achieve success by consciously balancing results, process, and relationships.

Skills:

- Evaluate success in each of three dimensions
- Make conscious choices to refocus attention when needed

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Seek Maximum Appropriate Involvement

Facilitative leaders increase involvement without losing control by seeking the maximum involvement appropriate to the situation.

Skills:

- Identify key stakeholders
- Involve stakeholders in the decisionmaking process
- Determine the appropriate decisionmaking process

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Model Behaviors that Facilitate Collaboration

Facilitative leaders create a safe environment for participation by modeling collaborative behaviors.

Skills:

- Share power of decisionmaking
- Highlight potential for success
- Actively encourage others to contribute
- Adjust plans to meet changing needs
- Accept others' ideas, perceptions, and feedback in a nondefensive way

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Design Pathways to Action

Facilitative leaders help build clear processes for realizing opportunities and solving problems.

Skills:

- Define where we want to go (goal)
- Define where we are (current work issue)
- Define how we are going to get there (process)

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Bring Out the Best in Others

Facilitative leaders develop relationships based on trust and respect to build environments where people learn and grow.

Skills:

- Listen as an ally
- Observe to give honest feedback at appropriate times
- Facilitate the success of others

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Celebrate Accomplishment

Facilitative leaders build people's pride, self-esteem, and commitment to their work by celebrating achievements and participation.

Skills:

- Recognize achievement
- Acknowledge people for their contribution
- Appreciate the different values that different people bring

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

D. Employment Policy Panel of Experts

(For use with Personnel section, pp. 69–95)

Training Objective

To familiarize participants with state and local laws regarding public school employment and other related policies.

This activity is best suited for pre-operational charter founders.

Materials Needed

Panel of experts, including a labor lawyer, experienced charter school administrator, a human resources professional with Equal Employment Opportunity experience, school district level staff, and so forth.

Ask panelists to come prepared to discuss one of the following:

- ADA interviewing guidelines (1995)
- Essential and marginal job functions
- Adverse impact
- Reasonable accommodation
- Federal employment laws
- Direct threat
- Different treatment and specific intent (unlawful discrimination)
- State employment laws

Ask them to each create and write out a scenario* as it relates to their area of discussion (see below for their application). If scenarios are created far enough in advance, copies can be made available for all participants. Panelists may also bring other handouts that they think will be useful for participants.

Instructions

Ask panelists and, if feasible, the participants to introduce themselves briefly.

Ask panelists to share with participants their prepared information on the staffing and policy development process (except for their scenarios).

After all panelists have shared, distribute the scenarios. If no copies were made in advance, ask panelists to share their scenarios one at a time. Ask participants to discuss what they would do in that situation and why. Panelists should be on the alert for the legality and practicality of responses.

*An example scenario in the area of different treatment and specific intent may read as follows:

You need to hire a custodian for the building. After interviewing several people, you narrow the decision down to two people: a 26-year-old man and a 54-year-old man. The job is physically demanding and requires a lot of energy, so you decide to hire the younger man. Question: Is this action justified? Why or why not?

E. Developing and Revising Internal Policy

(For use with Internal Policy Development section, pp. 96–123)

Training Objective

To assist participants with internal policy development and revision.

This activity is best suited for school teams that are pre-operational or are just beginning their first year of operation.

Materials Needed

1. Student/Parent Handbook Criteria handout
2. Student/Parent Policy Manual Criteria handout
3. Revisiting Criteria for a Student/Parent Handbook handout

Instructions

1. Review importance of establishing policy. (See beginning section on Internal Policy Development in the workbook for background information.)
2. Distribute handouts to participants and familiarize participants with their content.
3. Ask participants to begin working through each policy area with their teams. Encourage discussion.

Other Suggestions

Encourage participants to revisit their policies annually. One process includes opening dialogue with parents, teachers, and students in order to assess policy needs of which participants themselves may not be aware. The Revisiting Criteria for a Student/Parent Handbook handout is helpful for this process.

Encourage participants to follow a similar process for employee policies.

Tool IV: Student/Parent Handbook Criteria[12]

The following general topics are recommended for inclusion in a student/parent handbook. On a separate sheet of paper, begin drafting how your policy will read. Important issues to consider:

Handbook Criteria	Included
Introduction—include vision, mission	
Mission Statement—five elements: values, educational approach, curriculum focus, customer focus, and outcomes and goals	
Curriculum—include steps to developing your curriculum and sample curriculum	
Enrollment—enrollment procedures, discrimination laws, application deadlines, sample enrollment policies	
Accountability—annual report information; discuss mechanisms for measuring students' academic and nonacademic accomplishments (grading, report cards, etc.), board performance	
Assessment—techniques, need for assessment, testing required	
Leadership—school structure; describe what your leaders look like, their goals and strategies, training the leaders, and classroom observation for leaders	
Facilities—appropriate facility, locating facility, financing facility, and regulations; library hours; parental use of facilities (e.g., gym); policies for health and safety issues	
Finances and Budgeting—summary of financial plan and operating budget	
Appendices—include any sample materials you need	

12 Information adapted from Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center. (1997). *The Massachusetts charter school handbook* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research.

Tool V: Student/Parent Policy Manual Criteria[13]

The following are suggested items for student/parent policy manual criteria. Some schools will have a separate manual for parents and students, while others will have a combination manual.

Student Manual

- A brief overview of the school's history, mission, and vision
- A brief description of the school's structures, operations, governance, and staff
- The academic calendar and schedule
- An explanation of the school's instructional program, including the curriculum and instructional strategies
- An outline of the school's student assessment plans and policies
- An explanation of the school's graduation/matriculation standards and processes, and admission and transfer policies
- An explanation of harassment policies and grievance procedures
- A code of student conduct
- An explanation of what happens when the code of conduct is violated, including suspension and expulsion matters

Parent Manual

- A brief overview of the charter school concept and the school's history
- Parent involvement expectations and responsibilities
- Reciprocal obligations of the school toward the parent and student
- An explanation of harassment policies and grievance procedures
- Constructive suggestions on how the parent can support learning in the home and family activities
- A contact list explaining how parents can raise and resolve concerns regarding the school's operations and policies and suggestions on how parents can take a constructive role in the school's governance
- A description of the school's governing structure and how parents may become involved in the school's governance

13 Information adapted from Premack, E. (1998). *Charter school development guide: California edition* (Rev. ed.).

Tool III: Revisiting Criteria for a Student/Parent Handbook

Directions Together with your team members, review your school's current handbook. Assess the needs of the students and the parents to gain a better understanding of what information is necessary to include in the handbook. You may decide you need two separate handbooks. Once again, don't forget to brainstorm for new ideas!

Current Criteria	Assessment of Needs	New Criteria

Insurance Policies

(For use with Internal Policy Development section, pp. 96–123)

Training Objective

To familiarize participants with insurance options and requirements.

This activity is best suited for both pre-operational and operational participants.

Materials Needed

1. One or two insurance representatives who have worked with charter schools
2. Typical Insurance Coverages for Charter Schools list (a complete description of these coverages is provided in the workbook)

Instructions

This session consists of the insurance representatives explaining the various types of coverage that are available for charter schools. Provide Typical Insurance Coverages for Charter Schools for everyone. The representatives may or may not want to follow this handout as a guide for discussion.

Typical Insurance Coverages for Charter Schools

This list is designed to give you an idea of the typical insurance and employee benefit programs of a charter school. Specific insurance contracts should be consulted for details on terms, conditions, and exclusions.

Property

- Buildings and Personal Property on a Blanket Basis
- Special Perils Form
- Agreed Value
- Replacement Cost

Comprehensive Business Income/Extra Expense

Boiler and Machinery

Inland Marine (Water Damage, etc.)

Crime

Commercial General Liability

Employee Benefits Liability

Sexual or Physical Abuse/Molestation Vicarious Liability

School Board and Trustees Liability

Employment-Related Practices

Business Automobile

- Liability
- Hired and Non-Owned Auto Liability
- Physical Damage
- Comprehensive
- Collision

Professional Coverages

Student Accident/Health

Environmental

Excess Coverages

Workers Compensation

- Statutory Benefits
- Employers Liability

F. Additional Activities

Governance and Management Issues

- Role play a board with different insights and perspectives.
- What would best help the board get through a situation? Practice responding to scenarios in a game format (e.g., picking scenarios out of a hat). Focus on avoiding micro-management.

Business Plan and Financial Management

- Examine examples of extremely poor or mismanaged charters.
- Have a troubleshooting session. Example: What do you do if you budgeted $10,000 for materials and spent $9,500 by December?

Leadership

- Identify the leadership and personality styles that are needed for each role in running a charter school.
- Team-building activity: The Change Game—(see the Handbook of Organizational Development).
- Conduct case studies of leadership.

Personnel Issues

- Brainstorm a list of places to advertise for open positions. What community groups can get this out? How will you target a wide variety of backgrounds and ethnic groups?
- Develop a job description and evaluation, using the school's mission statement.
- Create a hiring/interview process. Considerations:
  - Develop an interview protocol based on mission and objectives.
  - Develop a hiring process—What will the interview process consist of besides answering questions? (portfolios, videos)
  - Should there be input from parents and students on interview questions for hiring?
- Invite an employment attorney to speak to the group about what to do and not say, reference checks during the hiring process.

- Conduct various policy workshops (see Workbook 4 for ideas)
- Provide sample policy manuals and forms
- Train others how to nurture process of policy development

Internal Policy Development

Workbook 5: Community Relations

Community Relations

Suggestions

- Learn how to understand your community (know your audience!). This can be accomplished by conducting a survey of community members to know where the community stands on certain issues, and, also, to get a sense of the needs of the community.
- Determine who you think belongs to your internal and external publics. This can be a real eye-opener and frame how you communicate.
- Establish the importance of student relations with the community (i.e., service learning).

A. Public Relations

Suggestions

- Trainer can choose to show all or parts of the community relations video.
- Remind participants to always tie/relate information back to their vision and mission.

Press Release for Your Charter School

(For use with Public Relations section, pp. 1–20)

Training Objective

To write a press release about your school.

This activity is best suited for all charter school leaders and small groups.

Materials Needed

1. Paper and pens
2. Samples of school press releases from media
3. Take-home handouts including Channels of Communication and Communication Materials Checklist

Instructions

1. Invite media representatives to the session to assist schools in writing their press release. This will also provide an excellent opportunity to network with the media.
2. Divide participants into small groups according to school. Each group will write a press release for their school. While in groups, discuss what kinds of things go into a press release.
3. Have media representatives present to explain how and what they would cover. This large-group discussion can follow the small-group activity.
4. Have media representatives bring samples of school press releases that portray positive and negative aspects of media coverage.

Tool I: Channels of Communication

Type of Message Transmission	Channel of Communication	Examples of Channel	Characteristics of Channel
A. Electronic	Television	National, regional, local cable, video	Usually expensive; good to build awareness beyond school's boundaries; possibility of news coverage; may be difficult to target specific populations
	Radio	National, regional, AM/FM, ethnic, public access, local	Informative; can be interactive; cost effective; possibility of talk radio interviews, PSAs; easier to target specific audiences
	Telecommunications	Telephone, fax, e-mail, Internet	Cost effective; only reaches those with access; phone banks are more costly and time consuming
B. Print	Newspaper	National, major metropolitan, rural, local, community, special interest, ethnic, daily, weekly, Sunday only	Letters to the editor, opinion editorials, news coverage, advertisements, announcements; effectiveness depends on how widely read the paper is by your target audience
	Magazines	National, specific interest, trade and professional, weekly, monthly	Large audience reached; may be costly
	Handouts	Pamphlets, brochures, information sheets, flyers, annual school reports/school report cards	Relatively inexpensive; provide quick, convenient information; probably not enough information if used alone; can be used as inserts in other publications
	Newsletters	Internal, external	Labor intensive; relatively inexpensive; personal
C. Direct Mail	Mailings	Letters, postcards, brochures	Relatively inexpensive; personal to target audience; can be very effective
D. Outdoor	Billboards	Roadside, sporting events, cultural events	May be costly; possibility of donated space
	Signs, posters, banners	Bus sides, taxi backs, T-shirts, bumper stickers	Visual message; creativity needed; cost varies
E. Community Outreach	External communication	Presentations to community groups and potential parents, speakers' bureau, open houses, staff and student involvement in the community	Cost-effective; labor intensive; promotes word-of-mouth information

Tool II: Communication Materials Checklist[14]

Listed below is a checklist of general materials that you may need as you develop your communication program.

Materials	Completed	In Process	N/A
A good logo and stationery design that will last (may include condensed version of mission statement)			
An easy-to-understand, one-page fact sheet about your school			
At least one press kit on the issues and activities you want to highlight to the media			
Brochures that can be printed on paper and adapted for a Web site			
Video, slides, overheads, and computer presentations			
Reports and studies (e.g., achievement data) for public release as news items			
One-paragraph and one-page bios on spokesperson and school leaders			
Copies of your current newsletter, if there is one			
Copies of newspaper articles about your school			
Photographs of school facilities, student activities, events			

14 From Bonk, K., Griggs, H., & Tynes, E. (1999). *The Jossey-Bass guide to strategic communications for nonprofits: A step-by-step guide to working with the media to generate publicity, enhance fundraising, build membership, change public policy, handle crises, and more.*

What's Missing?

(For use with Public Relations section, pp. 1–20)

Training Objective

To understand the importance of relating to a media scenario.

This activity is best suited for pre-operational and operational charter school leaders and small groups.

Materials Needed

A story, either fiction or nonfiction. If nonfiction, leave out the name of the school and individuals' names. The trainer should write the story prior to the session. The story (or scenario) should have four paragraphs and should cover an incident involving a charter school where the media may have misrepresented the school or something negative happened.

Instructions

1. Give one group the whole story; the second group the first and last paragraph; the third group the first and middle paragraph; the last group the middle and last paragraph.
2. Groups should discuss what is missing from the story, how the school may have been misrepresented.
3. All groups should share their insight into what is missing and see how different the stories are.
4. This activity shows the importance of having a point person from the school and sending media only to that person.

Additional Activities

- Develop Web pages and listservs, include graphics and metaphors
- Role-play as media representatives. As a "reporter" (trainer), ask questions to participants, such as:
  - — How do you feel about taking money away from schools?
  - — How are you assessing your students?
  - — Why do you have this type of educational program?
  - — Do you have a crisis plan to ensure the safety of your students?

Specific to Communication

- Learn the art of communicating: practice with phone calls, complaints, meetings, visitors, pressure groups, key stakeholders, and business/industry.
- Practice making oral presentations that are user-friendly (may be specifically about your school).
- Practice writing to a particular audience for a specific reason. Share the letters so that everyone goes away with an "idea bank" for their files.

B. Marketing Your School

Suggestions

- May want to have participants walk away with a marketing plan, at least pieces and a foundation
- Remind participants about the importance of developing good relations with other schools

Create a School Advertisement

(For use with Marketing Your School section, pp. 21–32)

Training Objective

To create a school advertisement.

This activity is best suited for all charter school leaders and in small-group discussions.

Materials Needed

1. Pens
2. Large sheets of paper
3. Handouts include Methods of Getting Your Word Out and Parent/Community Involvement Opportunities.

Instructions

1. Write words or short phrases on a large sheet of paper to design your school advertisement.
2. In the advertisement, identify the target audience and market the entire community using difference strategies for different groups.

3. Sample words or phrases may include: safe environment, small class sizes, parent involvement, community involvement, vision and/or mission, and/or a description of the educational program. Also, schools may want to include a picture of the school and statistics for student/teacher ratio.

4. Participants should leave with a planned advertisement.

Methods of Getting Your Word Out[15]

- Have enrollment and school information available at local libraries
- Send flyers to social services organizations describing your school and/or inviting them to an event (Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis)
- Community and youth centers, after-school, and recreation programs
- Place fliers in real estate offices
- Present at newcomers clubs
- Encourage word of mouth (satisfied parents, satisfied staff)
- Submit classified ads in newspapers
- Feature stories in newspapers
- Mail information to PTA and other parent organizations
- Interview on local radio talk shows
- Advertise on ethnic radio stations
- Send press releases to the local media
- Write letters to the editor/editorials
- Distribute newsletters
- Displays in corporation lobbies, shopping malls
- Place posters in children's clothing stores, day-care centers, hospitals
- Publicize student awards ceremonies
- Post information on bulletin boards (laundromats, gyms, beauty shops, bowling alleys, grocery stores)

15 From: www.nycharterschools.org and njw.injersey.com/schools.

- Advertise on billboards
- Advertise on buses
- Information/orientation meetings
- Hand out bumper stickers
- Send information to professional associations and publications
- Display banners outside the school advertising events and inviting all to attend
- Create a video showing that your school is a safe place to be, and play it in doctors' offices, restaurants, malls, anywhere that potential families may be
- Invite people to come in to visit the school on a regular basis (open house)
- Advertise in the "Penny Saver" or in Val-U-Pac coupon books if you have them in your area
- Local TV stations may advertise nonprofit events free of charge

Parent/Community Involvement Opportunities: 50 Ideas[16]

Assist at the School

1. Share information with a student or class about a hobby.
2. Share information with a student or class about a career.
3. Share information with students about a country in which you have lived or visited.
4. Tutor one or a small group of students in reading, math, or other areas.
5. Help coach an athletic team.
6. Help check a student's written work.
7. Help publish a school or classroom newsletter. (This can also be done at home.)
8. Help sew or paint a display.
9. Help build something (such as a loft in a classroom).

16 Center for School Change. (1997). *Parent/community involvement opportunities: Fifty ideas.*

10. Help students work on a final exhibition or project. (This can also be done at home or at a workplace.)
11. Help answer the school phone.
12. Help plan and/or build a new playground for the school.
13. Help plan a theme-based presentation for students.
14. Help present a theme-based program for students.
15. Demonstrate cooking from a particular country or culture to students.
16. Share a skill with the faculty.
17. Help students plan and build an outdoor garden or other project that beautifies the school.
18. Help coach students for academic competitions such as Odyssey of the Mind or Math Masters.
19. Bring senior citizens to school to watch a student production.

Extend Learning by Helping To Arrange Experiences in the Community

20. Help set up a student internship at your business, organization, or agency.
21. Host a one-day shadow study about your business or organization for one or a small group of students.
22. Go on a local field trip with a teacher and a group of students.
23. Go on an extended (three- to five-day) cross-country field trip with a teacher and students.
24. Contact a local business or organization regarding possible cooperation.
25. Help create a natural area/learning space outside the building.

Serve on an Advisory or Decisionmaking Committee

26. Volunteer for the schoolwide site council.
27. Serve on a school committee that reports to the site council.
28. Represent the school on a district committee.
29. Serve as an officer on the school's PTA.
30. Help organize a parent organization for the school.
31. Help design a parent and/or student survey for the school.

32. Help conduct and/or tabulate the results of a parent survey regarding the school.

Increase Financial Resources Available to the School

33. Help write a proposal that will bring new resources to the school.
34. Donate materials to the school.
35. Arrange for a business or other organization to donate materials to the school.
36. Help with a fund-raising campaign for the school.

Share Information

37. Serve as a member of a telephone tree to help distribute information quickly.
38. Write a letter to legislators about the school.
39. Write a letter to school board members about the school.
40. Go to a school board meeting to advocate for the school.
41. Go to another school to provide information about your school.
42. Help create a brochure or booklet about the school.
43. Help translate information about the school into a language other than English.
44. Help translate at a parent/teacher conference for people who don't speak English well.
45. Provide transportation to a parent/teacher conference for a parent who needs a ride.
46. Write an article about school activities for publication.
47. Arrange for a political leader (mayor, council member, state representative, etc.) to visit the school.

Help Other Parents Develop Parenting Skills

48. Teach or help with a class on ways to be stronger parents.
49. Help produce a videotape on ways to be effective parents.
50. Help write, publish, and distribute a list of parenting tips.

Additional Activities

- Show community relations video tips and ask participants to establish a crisis plan
- Tour Web sites (school advertisements, etc.) on the Internet to show what information and resources are available
- Do an entire session on how to deal with the media

C. Moving Beyond Controversy

Suggestions

- Consider different cultures in different scenarios while conducting sessions in this area
- Consider reminding participants to revisit the vision/mission to move beyond conflict
- Allow time for the participants to get to know each other in the large group and also time within the small school groups

Debate with Mediation

(For use with Moving Beyond Controversy section, pp. 33–44)

Training Objective

To establish a method to move beyond conflict.

This activity is best suited for all charter school leaders and both large and small groups.

Materials Needed

1. Scenarios with high conflict issues—Set up scenarios (prior to the activity) by establishing high conflict issues with two opposing sides and create a third party through which conflict must be expressed (mediator).
2. Take-home handout—Working with Difficult People

Instructions

1. Divide the large group into three separate groups: one in support of issue, one in opposition, and one as a third party to mediate.
2. Allow debate to occur between the first two groups while the third party acts as the mediator.
3. This activity will allow participants to see the benefits of having a debate or discussion in a controlled environment.

Working with Difficult People

It can be a real zoo out there. Working with people is often more demanding than lion taming. Perhaps that's because there's an animal inside many of us, suggest Frances Norwood and Annette Nunez,[17] professors at the University of Southwestern Louisiana. They use animals to describe traits of difficult people and then suggest ways to "tame" them.

Bulls They come out charging, attacking the other person, usually because they feel frustrated. Because they feel their victims are inferior, they believe they have tremendous power and often act abusive, abrupt, and intimidating.

To manage Bulls:

1. Let them speak for a while to let off steam.
2. Sit or stand deliberately and dramatically to get their attention.
3. Call them by name and maintain eye contact.
4. Ask them to have a seat.
5. Present your ideas forcefully.
6. Refuse to argue.
7. Be as friendly as possible.

Snakes They enjoy blending in with the surroundings and striking suddenly when their victims least expect it.

To manage Snakes:

1. Bring problems out into the open.
2. Involve the group.
3. Smoke out hidden problems through surveys, suggestion boxes, and so forth.

Cheetahs They burst forth in sudden temper displays (a tactic learned early in life to cope with fear and helplessness), as an automatic response to threat.

17 From Norwood, F.W., & Nunez, A.V. (1987) Managing the animal within us. *SAM Advanced Management Journal, 52*(2).

To manage Cheetahs:

1. Sincerely try to alleviate their fears.
2. Help them regain confidence and control.
3. Talk with them privately.

"Macaw" Parrots

They talk and chatter—sometimes sense, sometimes nonsense. They feel powerless, think others should behave in certain ways, and complain when they do not.

To manage "Macaws":

1. Give them your full attention and maintain eye contact so they'll feel important.
2. If they have a complaint, do not jump to conclusions before you hear the matter out.
3. Ask for facts, and get the complaint in writing.

Ostriches

They stick their heads in the sand, handling painful situations in noncommittal ways. They tend to avoid other people and themselves.

To manage Ostriches:

1. Use questions to get them to talk. Do not fill in the silences.
2. Summarize what they say, ending the summary with an open-ended sentence or question.
3. Listen attentively when they talk. End the discussion if they clam up, but set up another appointment.

Cubs

They are humorous, friendly, and cooperative. They agree, whether or not that's what they truly think. Needing to be liked leads them to make unrealistic commitments.

To manage Cubs:

1. Let them know they can be honest.
2. Compliment them.

3. When you suspect their commitments, say, "I do not think I could do that in the time you've allotted. When I did that it took me more time."

4. Look for the true feelings in their humor.

Hyenas They "chill out" people's positive feelings. They lack faith in other people and wilt them with sarcasm and doubts.

To manage Hyenas:

1. When they predict failure, ask: "What's the worst thing that can happen?"

2. Make positive statements about past successes.

3. Show your determination to take action and succeed.

Rhinoceroses They are strong, knowledgeable people whose "know-it-all" attitudes are overbearing. Their ideas are best; yours is unimportant, except to point out shortcomings.

To manage Rhinoceroses:

1. Be certain your facts are correct when you present ideas to them.

2. Repeat what they say to avoid their over-explanation.

3. Use questions when you express disagreement.

Peacocks They pretend to be experts, but aren't, so often give wrong or partially correct advice.

To manage Peacocks:

1. Let them maintain their dignity, but do not rely on their information.

2. Remind them of facts diplomatically.

Turkeys They can't make a decision. They're usually nice, but hope most situations will resolve themselves or be forgotten before they must decide.

To manage Turkeys:

1. Talk through the decisionmaking process step-by-step.

2. Listen carefully to identify their fears.

3. Show why ideas or proposals are worthwhile.

4. Emphasize the need to be decisive.

Beavers

They are hardworking and proficient but they arouse other employees' jealousy and suspicion. They are often underpaid because they do not demand more, or are bypassed for promotion to keep them doing their present jobs.

To manage Beavers:

1. Do not exploit them, and do not make them favorites.

2. Advise them to channel some energy into developing better relationships with fellow employees.

SUGGESTION: Recognize your coworkers' animal types—and your own. Of course, no one is an animal all the time—it's stressful situations that bring out the beast in us.

Additional Activities

- Develop a conflict plan—have participants write a plan to include how they will deal with conflict, either between coworkers, parents and teachers, and so forth

- Use the community relations video as a way to introduce the subject; stop and expand on ideas; have the group come up with additional scenarios and have others respond

Appendix: Charter School Leadership Training Needs Assessment

1. School information:

a) What is the name and address of your charter school? _____

_____

b) Name of contact person for your school: _____

Telephone for contact person: _____

Fax for contact person: _____

E-mail address for contact person: _____

c) Which best describes your charter school:

☐ newly created ☐ previously a "regular" public school ☐ previously a private school

d) Assess the level of your school's dependency on the district or county for the following types of services:

	Complete dependence				Complete independence
FISCAL	1	2	3	4	5
LEGAL	1	2	3	4	5
OPERATIONAL	1	2	3	4	5
EDUCATIONAL	1	2	3	4	5
PROGRAM	1	2	3	4	5
PERSONNEL	1	2	3	4	5

e) When did/will your school begin serving students? Month_____ Year _____

f) How do you describe your school's educational model (i.e., what is the predominant instructional pedagogy? For example, Waldorf, experiential, Core Knowledge, Multiple Intelligences, etc.)?

_____

_____

g) How is your charter school unique compared to "regular" public schools? _____

_____

2. Student demographic information:

Total student enrollment: _____ ☐ Actual ☐ Anticipated

Grades and/or ages served: _____

Grades and/or ages stated in charter, if different: _____

Percent minority: _____ Percent special education: _____

Percent eligible for free and reduced-price lunch: _____

3. Training Needs Assessment of Leadership Skills

Please assess your knowledge, skills, and experience levels in the following areas of charter school leadership. Please also mark the level of priority you place on each of these areas, and whether you would like assistance.

VK = very knowledgeable High = high priority AN = assistance needed

SK = somewhat knowledgeable Med. = medium priority

NK = no/limited knowledge Low = low priority

Leadership skills	VK	SK	NK	High	Med.	Low	AN
A. Start-Up Logistics							
• Establishing/developing a clear school mission, vision, and culture							
• Establishing a core founding group that includes experts in several areas							
• Understanding the charter application and renewal process							
• Preparing for and undergoing accreditation							
• Obtaining adequate facilities and financing them							
• Selecting the legal status of your school							

B. Regulatory Issues	VK	SK	NK	High	Med.	Low	AN
• Compliance with civil rights laws, including regarding student and staff recruitment							
• Compliance with special education requirements (IDEA, ADA, etc.)							
• Compliance with other federal regulations, (OSHA, FERPA, FMLA, etc.)							
• Compliance with state regulatory issues (waiver status, collective bargaining, open meeting law, Public Records Act, health/safety/privacy issues, etc.)							
C. Assessment & Accountability							
• Understanding what is meant by academic, fiscal, and public/parent accountability							
• Developing appropriate curriculum and aligning it to standards and assessment							
PROGRAM EVALUATION • Developing measurable student performance goals, standards, and outcomes, including integration with the state standards							
• Conducting both a summative and formative evaluation							
• Selecting effective methods to assess student performance							
• Collecting, interpreting, and reporting student performance data							

	D. Governance and Management	VK	SK	NK	High	Med.	Low	AN
GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP	• Selecting and establishing an appropriate governance model							
	• Establishing and developing effective charter governing boards							
	• Establishing roles of founders, teachers, parents, and administrators							
	• Creating and developing a positive and supportive school climate							
	• Developing leadership/interpersonal skills (communication, conflict resolution, problem solving, decisionmaking, building collaboration, valuing diversity, etc.)							
	• Establishing/developing strong relations with local or sponsor district or county office							
	• Planning for transition from planning to operational stages of development							
	• Developing a business plan							
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	• Understanding the state charter school funding system and laws							
	• Developing financial and operational arrangements with sponsor district or county office, including for ancillary services (e.g., transportation)							
	• Establishing and/or managing own fiscal systems (accounting, payroll, audits, etc.)							
	• Developing a start-up budget							
	• Developing and reporting annual and long-term budgets and fiscal plans (annual budget, cash flow plan, long-term financial projections, etc.)							
	• Conducting year-end audits							
	• Establishing clear financial management policies and practices within the school							

D. Governance and Management (continued)		VK	SK	NK	High	Med.	Low	AN
INTERNAL POLICY	• Developing policies around liability issues, health, and safety							
	• Developing student/parent policies (attendance, discipline, dress code, involvement, etc.)							
	• Drafting other policies (insurance, harassment, facilities, board bylaws, etc.)							
PERSONNEL	• Employee selection practices							
	• Compensation and benefits							
	• Code of conduct, grievance, and corrective action procedures							
E. Community Relations								
• Developing a public relations plan, both with internal and external communication								
• Working with the media								
• Dealing with media during emergency situations								
• Marketing your school to potential students and staff								
• Dealing with internal and external conflict								
F. Other areas of need and/or comments:								

Describe the greatest hurdles in establishing your charter school:

Describe the leadership/management skills that you would most like to learn and/or improve.

Describe what you expect your school to look like in two or three years and why your school would be a good candidate for participation in this training:

List names of the prospective members of your team and place a check mark (✓) by those who assisted in completing this assessment.

Tell us about the dynamics of your team (i.e., commitment to each other and to the success of the charter school, the role each team member has played in the charter school, and any other information that would be helpful to those considering your school for this training):

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